

**3rd October 2025**

## **Headteachers update**

It has been another busy and exciting week here at Belsay. On Wednesday we had our SEND coffee morning, brilliantly led by Mrs Aynsley. It was heartening to see so many parents and carers come along to share in the discussion. The session was both informative and reassuring, giving families the opportunity to hear about the support we offer in school and to share their own experiences. Thank you so much to those who attended - your involvement makes such a difference. As a school, we place a strong emphasis on neurodiversity and helping the children to understand that everyone learns in different ways. These conversations with the children help to nurture the inclusive, supportive environment we are so proud of, where every child feels valued and encouraged to be the very best version of themselves.

Thursday brought one of those exciting calendar highlights, school photographs! The children looked incredibly smart and grown-up and it was especially lovely to see siblings smiling together for their group photos. Thank you for your efforts in getting everyone to school looking so smart and photo-ready.

The sound of music is also beginning to fill our school as the children have now started practising more for our Harvest Festival. Those traditional songs and family favourites always bring such a sense of warmth and togetherness and we are looking forward to seeing you all at our annual celebration. Please remember to keep 17 October, 9am marked in your diaries and if possible, book the morning off work to come and join us. It really is one of those occasions where the school community comes together to celebrate and the children love performing to a full hall of parents, grandparents and carers.

We also have some very happy news to share - Miss Whitehouse will be going on maternity leave at Christmas as she prepares to welcome her new arrival. We know you will join us in wishing her all the very best for this exciting chapter ahead. In her absence, we are delighted to confirm that Mrs Cram, from Darras Hall, will be joining the Belsay team to cover. Over the coming weeks, you may spot her around school, so please do give her a warm Belsay welcome when you see her. We are confident that she will quickly become part of our family and love her time up here!

Finally, we ended the week in style with one of our favourite traditions - celebrating our Outstanding Achievement award winners and our Hot Chocolate Friday stars. Well done to all of this week's winners - you continue to impress us with your hard work, positive attitude and determination to succeed. These moments of celebration remind us all of the importance of recognising effort and achievement, both big and small, across our school community.

Have a fun-filled weekend but please find time to rest up and enjoy some quality family time.

**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 **Miss Dixon, Miss Houghton and Mr Shaw.**

### What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TECHNOLOGY ATTACHMENT

In today's digital age, children are increasingly forming emotional and habitual attachments to their devices. With 96% regularly accessing the internet and nearly half engaging in live streaming or content sharing, their online presence is greater than ever. This guide explores the phenomenon of technology attachment in young people and offers expert advice on fostering healthier digital habits.

#### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### WIRED FOR REWARD

Children's brains are particularly sensitive to reward-based stimulation, and some digital platforms, especially those offering quick-hit content like short-form videos, are designed to exploit this. The instant gratification of likes, comments, and rapid scene changes triggers dopamine release, making these interactions highly addictive. Over time, this may contribute to changes in attention patterns and a reduced inclination towards activities that involve prolonged focus or delayed gratification, such as reading, problem-solving, or creative play.

#### NIGHT-TIME TECH HABITS

Screen use late into the evening can disrupt natural sleep patterns by suppressing melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Children engaging with stimulating content may experience delayed bedtimes, lower sleep quality, and increased fatigue during the day. Additionally, fear of missing out (FOMO) on online interactions can cause anxiety and resistance to logging off, creating a cycle of late-night engagement and tired mornings.

#### SHAPED BY SCREENS

For many children, digital spaces have become a key arena for identity exploration and expression. Social media encourages them to curate their image carefully, with likes, comments, and shares serving as social validation. This environment can be self-esteem to online feedback, making children vulnerable to comparison, self-doubt, and pressure to present a perfect version of themselves, even when it doesn't reflect reality.

#### DIGITAL WORLD DANGERS

The internet can expose children to unfiltered content, some of which may be inappropriate, misleading, or harmful. Cyberbullying, exposure to idealised lifestyles, and online predators are all risks children face, often without fully understanding the consequences. Misinformation can shape distorted worldviews, while constant comparison to others can erode self-confidence. Without guidance, children may internalise these digital dangers, impacting their emotional and mental health.

#### DIGITAL DEPENDENCY BUILDS

Devices often become digital comfort blankets. In moments of boredom, anxiety, or loneliness, children may instinctively reach for screens to self-soothe. This reliance on digital distraction limits their ability to develop healthy coping mechanisms, such as mindfulness, conversation or physical activity. As the habit builds, their dependency may displace real-world experiences and emotional resilience.

#### FRIENDSHIPS & FILTERS

Technology transforms how young people socialise, often replacing face-to-face interaction with text-based or image-based communication. While messaging apps and social media enable connection, they may also limit emotional expression and the development of essential interpersonal skills, such as tone recognition, empathy, and reading body language. As a result, some children may become less confident with exchanges in person and more reliant on digital personas to navigate friendships.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

#### READ THE ROOM

Pay attention to behavioural changes that may signal unhealthy tech attachment. This includes mood swings, increased secrecy about online activity, withdrawal from family time or hobbies, and visible distress when separated from devices. These cues can indicate deeper emotional reliance or even exposure to distressing content. Early recognition allows for proactive support and meaningful conversation.

#### DON'T WAIT, REACH OUT EARLY

If a child's relationship with technology starts affecting their emotional wellbeing, school performance, or social connections, don't hesitate to seek help. Open up discussions with teachers, pastoral staff, or digital wellbeing professionals. Early intervention is key, and a supportive network can provide tools, resources, and reassurance for both children and adults navigating this evolving digital landscape.

#### SHAPE DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Create a balanced digital environment with clear guidelines on when and how devices can be used. This includes screen-free zones (e.g. bedrooms, dining tables), app restrictions, and time limits. More importantly, involve children in these decisions and explain the reasoning behind them, even reflecting upon your own digital use so they can see it's something we all have to manage. Turning boundaries into a dialogue, not just directives, helps build trust and encourages self-regulation.

#### SET THE STANDARD

Children often model the behaviour they see. When adults demonstrate healthy digital habits, such as prioritising face-to-face conversation, balancing screen time with other activities, and using devices with purpose, children are more likely to follow suit. Share your own positive uses of technology and invite children to do the same. This collaborative approach helps demystify tech use and encourages responsible engagement.



## 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.

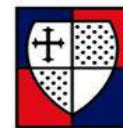
**Current Whole School attendance is 96.01%** Our **NEW** target for Whole School Attendance is 97%.

| Class  | Weekly attendance | Annual attendance |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Willow | 100%              | 99.13%            |
| Maple  | 94.62%            | 97.12%            |
| Alder  | 92.40%            | 93.00%            |
| Oak    | 97.39%            | 97.37%            |

| 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

Another busy week for all of us in Willow class!

This week, we shared the lovely story *It's Okay to be Different*. The children really enjoyed discussing the important message of celebrating what makes each of us unique. We had some thoughtful conversations about kindness, respect and how our differences make us special.

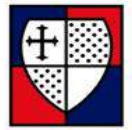
In Maths, we have been exploring the numbers 1 and 2. The children have practised recognising, counting and representing these numbers in lots of different ways. We also had fun creating repeating patterns using colours, shapes and objects from our classroom.



Our Forest School sessions have been as busy as ever! This week, the children worked together to set up the fire pit circle.. There was great excitement as we talked about the safe and sensible ways we will use it in the coming weeks. Everyone is looking forward to enjoying this new experience.

It has been a fantastic week of curiosity and teamwork. I am so proud of how the children are growing in confidence and independence every day. Thank you for all of your support with this. Have a lovely weekend.

**Miss Houghton**



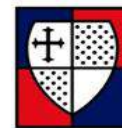
## Classroom updates - Maple Class

This week, Maple Class had a brilliant time in History! On Tuesday, we stepped into the shoes of explorers and thought carefully about the challenges they faced. We discovered that exploring was both dangerous and difficult, and that those who set off into the unknown needed to be extremely brave. Everyone was fascinated to learn just how many risks adventurers had to overcome in the past.

Working together in expedition teams, the children sailed to the school wildlife area and solved a variety of tricky problems an explorer might encounter. From fending off wild animals to navigating through extreme weather, fixing broken compasses, finding fresh water, and climbing treacherous mountains, each group worked collaboratively to think of solutions. The children showed fantastic teamwork and resilience, and by the end of the lesson we all agreed that explorers needed courage, resourcefulness and determination to succeed!



Miss Dixon



## Classroom updates- Alder class



This week in English we have been writing some beautiful descriptions of a character from our class text 'Anglo Saxon Boy'. Year 3 have worked hard on including amazing adjectives and expanded noun phrases while Year 4 have thought hard about using paragraphs to first provide a detailed description of the warrior's appearance, and then about his personality. Some even wrote a third paragraph about his actions and the way in which he moves.

In Maths we have come to the end of our topic. Both Year 3 and 4 completed their end of topic assessment and showed that they had really remembered our learning during this block. We look forward to starting the next block all about addition and subtraction. In addition Year 4 are really gearing themselves up to a focus on times tables this year.

In Science we looked at a range of appliances and tried to sort them in a variety of ways. We also looked at different electrical components. We looked at the symbols scientists use to represent each component and had a go at making circuits based on diagrams provided. In History, we explored St. Oswald and looked at how he shaped Anglo-Saxon Northumbria. We enjoyed exploring the timeline of his life, mapping the key points of his journey and exploring how he brought Christianity to the region through Holy Island.

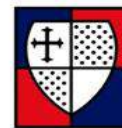
A huge congratulations to Sophie for her outstanding achievement. An incredible 4th over all, 1st in the sprint and throwing, 5th in the long jump and 8th in the 400m. She really is lightening fast. We couldn't be prouder.



| # | PARTICIPANT  | RESULT      | POINTS |
|---|--|-------------|--------|
| 1 | BIB: 891 , Order: 12<br>Sophie Alice FOXTON<br>2017 - GBR<br>Belsay School<br>U10 , Std. | 13.05<br>PB | 55     |

| # | PARTICIPANT   | RESULT | POINTS |
|---|---|--------|--------|
| 1 | BIB: 891 , Lane: 5<br>Sophie Alice FOXTON<br>2017 - GBR<br>Belsay School<br>U10 | 9.40   | 80     |

Mrs Aynsley & Mrs Rutter



## Classroom updates - Oak Class

Year 5 and 6 have absolutely smashed it again, at the top end of school this week. We've brought our English unit to a brilliant close by finishing and publishing our non-chronological reports on WWI poetry. The children have worked incredibly hard to include all the features we've been learning about, and the results really show their effort and creativity.

In Maths, we have begun our addition unit, the first of our four functions this term. Using concrete, pictorial and abstract strategies, the children have been showing great confidence as they build fluency and accuracy with increasingly tricky calculations.

Our KS2 football afternoon was a real highlight, with Oak Class pupils setting an excellent example as leaders, showing teamwork, encouragement and respect throughout.

In History, we delved deeper into WWII life on the home front, focusing on the vital work done at Bletchley Park. The class were especially fascinated to learn about Alan Turing and the Enigma code, and how this secret work helped Britain and the Allies.

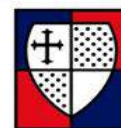
Finally, in PSHE, we explored the risks of AI and online publishing. The children discussed how important it is to think carefully about what we share, and how to stay safe and responsible when using the internet.

A brilliant week of learning and leading. Well done Oak Class!



Mr McLeod

# Friday Flyer



## Dates for your Diary

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

| Date                                | Time      |  |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Monday 13th October                 | Morning   | Flu Immunisations                                    |
| Friday 17th October                 | 9am       | Harvest Festival                                     |
| Tuesday 21st October                | All day   | Center for Life Trip - Willow and Maple Class        |
| Tuesday 21st October                | 3.15pm    | PTA Halloween Disco                                  |
| Wednesday 22nd October              | All day   | Cragside Trip - Alder and Oak Class                  |
| Friday 24th October                 | 3:15pm    | School closes for half term                          |
| Monday 3rd November                 | All Day   | Teacher Training Day                                 |
| Tuesday 4th November                | 8:45am    | School reopens                                       |
| Monday 17th & Tuesday 18th November | Times TBC | Parents Evening - details to follow later this month |
| Friday 5th December                 | 9am       | Christmas Nativity Performance                       |

# Friday Flyer



We kindly remind you that the school car park should not be used between 8:20am - 9:10am and 2:50pm and 3:30pm. During these times, our buses and taxis need clear access to park and manoeuvre safely so that children can board and disembark without risk.

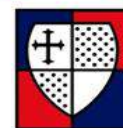
Thank you for your cooperation in helping keep the car park safe.

The flyer features a central illustration of a school building with a sign that says 'SCHOOL'. In front of the school, a diverse group of people is shown: a person on a bicycle, a person in a wheelchair, a woman with a baby, a family with a dog, a person with a stroller, and a person on a scooter. To the right of the school is a triangular warning sign with two children and a rectangular sign below it that says 'School'. A yellow zigzag line runs across the scene with the text 'SCHOOL — KEEP — CLEAR' written in yellow. The background is light blue with a sun and clouds. The bottom section of the flyer has a red background with two white cars, one on the left and one on the right, each with people inside. The text in this section reads: 'As a driver you have a responsibility to park in a safe and considerate manner. Park with care and help make the area near and around our school a safer place for everyone.'

## Safer Parking around our school

As a driver you have a responsibility to park in a safe and considerate manner.  
Park with care and help make the area near and around our school a safer place for everyone.

# Friday Flyer



Belsay PTA invites children to decorate a spooky plate for Halloween. There will be prizes for the most spooktacular entries. Please pay your £1 entry fee to the 'Friends of Belsay' account (details have been shared on our ClassDojo post). Plates will be coming home today and must be returned to school no later than the 13th October.

A purple-themed flyer for a 'Spooky Plate' competition. The background is decorated with various Halloween icons: a spider on a web, a ghost, a skull, a eyeball, a witch's hat, a pumpkin, a bat, a candle, and a witch's broom. The text is centered and reads: 'PTA DECORATE A SPOOKY PLATE COMPETITION - £1.00'. Below this, it says 'PLATES WILL BE SENT HOME ON FRIDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> OCT—PLENTY OF TIME TO CREATE YOUR SPOOKTACULAR DESIGN!' and 'PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME AND CLASS ON THE BACK. RETURN PLATES BY 13TH OCTOBER TO ENTER THE COMPETITION.'

PTA  
DECORATE A  
**SPOOKY  
PLATE**  
COMPETITION - £1.00

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Belsay Primary School

# Friday Flyer

Belsay School



**NEW FEES 25/26**  
**MORE FLEXIBILITY**



**BREAKFAST CLUB:**

**£5.50 from 7:45am**



**AFTER SCHOOL CLUB:**

**£7.00 3:15pm-4:30pm**



**STAY LATER FOR LESS:**

**£2.25 for every 30mins**  
**from 4:30pm-6pm**

Look out for our half-termly special events. All children welcome whether or not they attend clubs regularly.

Find out more at [www.belsaydaycare.co.uk](http://www.belsaydaycare.co.uk)

[belsaydaycare@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:belsaydaycare@yahoo.co.uk)

**01661 881704**



Belsay Primary School

# Friday Flyer

Belsay School



# 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**

Belsay Primary School

# Friday Flyer

Belsay School



ALL STARS SPORT

# FREE RUGBY DEVELOPMENT

SESSION



Free rugby development session in partnership with Ponteland RFC. This session is open to players aged 6-16 and all ability levels. The session will be delivered by highly experienced coaches and ex players.

**31st October 2025**  
**10am - 1pm**

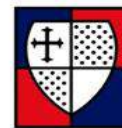


Ponteland RFC, Callerton Lane, NE20 9EG  
<https://all-stars-sport.classforkids.io/camp/32>

Belsay Primary School

# Friday Flyer

Belsay School



Alastair Lord is currently offering a free brass instrument trial (which can be held in school) Please complete this [Google form](#) for more information or to arrange a trial.

LEARN **BRASS!**

French Horn  
Cornet  
Baritone  
Trumpet  
Tuba  
Tenor Horn  
Trombone

*Alastair Lord*  
  
**Brass Teacher**  
*Twenty years teaching experience*

Learn in School  
Group or 1-1 lessons  
All instruments provided!

scan HERE →  
For more info and to sign up  
Contact: 07834226096  
lord.alastair@gmail.com

