



17th October 2025

Headteachers update

What a wonderful week it has been at Belsay! The atmosphere around school has been full of joy, hard work and that special sense of togetherness that makes our community so strong. As always, our children have shown kindness, enthusiasm and pride in everything they do and it is a privilege to see our school values shining through in classrooms, corridors and beyond.

Today's Harvest Festival was a true highlight. It was an absolute pleasure to see so many families join us and fill the hall with warmth and support. The children performed beautifully and there is something incredibly special about hearing their voices singing together and the confidence shown in standing up and saying their lines, it really does bring the hall to life. Moments like these remind us how lucky we are to be part of such a close-knit school family. A huge thank you for the generous food donations; these will go a long way in supporting those in our wider community who are in need.

This month we are marking Black History Month and in school we have been talking about why this is such an important time for reflection and learning. We have linked our discussions to the story of Rosa Parks, exploring the themes of courage, fairness and standing up for what is right. Staff will be delivering focused sessions before half term and the children have also been given an optional challenge to research further at home - there may even be a little reward to keep motivation high!

You may also have noticed a slight change in the playground landscape... yes, the chicken coop has disappeared! Please don't worry - our feathered friends are safe, happy and currently enjoying a well-deserved holiday at Mrs Rutter's farm. They are being thoroughly spoiled and will return to us in the Spring, hopefully refreshed and ready for their next adventure with the children. I know they are being missed already by a number of children.

We ended the week with our usual Celebration Assembly and of course, Hot Chocolate, recognising those children who have gone above and beyond in effort, kindness or learning. Well done everyone, you definitely deserve all of the accolades.

Wishing all our families a restful and happy weekend, only one more week to go that includes trips and of course the amazing Halloween Disco! Thank you, as always, for being part of our Belsay community.

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.**

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

- #### 1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's all too commonly common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling' – scrolling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose instead of aimlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.
- #### 2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching or reading can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.
- #### 3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media, it's worth spending time with children to help them find something positive and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child as part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.
- #### 4 REDUCE SCREEN TIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capability to monitor screen time, they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.
- #### 5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screen time can create a bit of free time to fill, and young people can often take advantage of this when alone or sleeping away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently shut down on their screen time, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.
- #### 6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

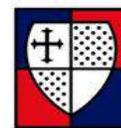
One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day when they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver 'personalised' social notifications to draw them back in, to avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.
- #### 7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish healthy from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.
- #### 8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox' from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screen time and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.
- #### 9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screen time reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.
- #### 10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many reasons that are moving towards being phone free due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screen time is important, set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, as it's not just seen as a punishment.



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.

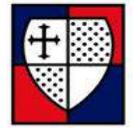
Current Whole School attendance is 96.47%. Our **NEW** target for Whole School Attendance is 97%.

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Willow	100%	99.43%
Maple	100%	97.12%
Alder	98.40%	93.76%
Oak	100%	98.02%

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 wonderful week it has been in Willow Class! The children have been busy learning, exploring and celebrating the changing season in so many lovely ways.

This week we joined the whole school in celebrating our Harvest Festival. The children sang beautifully and shared their learning about the importance of helping others and being thankful for what we have. We were so proud of their confidence and enthusiasm for their first whole school performance, well done Willow Class!

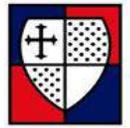
Our story focus has been The Little Red Hen. The children have enjoyed retelling the story through role play, sequencing activities and creative crafts. We have been thinking about teamwork and kindness, learning that when we help each other great things can happen! Next week we are looking forward to working together to make bread.

In Forest School this week we continued to focus on fire safety and how to stay safe around an open flame. The children listened carefully, followed the safety rules and enjoyed the highlight of the day toasting marshmallows! It was a wonderful opportunity to learn new skills and work together outdoors.



The children have also loved spending time in our outdoor area where there has been lots of enthusiastic digging and exploring! They have been busy searching for worms, discovering different textures in the soil and using tools safely. It has been fantastic to see their curiosity and teamwork as they investigated the outdoor area.

Thank you for your continued support. Have a lovely weekend ready for the last week of the half term!
Miss Houghton



Classroom updates - Maple Class

This week, Year 1 and 2 have been working incredibly hard in English. The children have been busy rewriting the story of Zog in their own words, using the past tense, interesting adjectives, and accurate punctuation. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as writers, and everyone should be proud of their fantastic efforts. There has also been a noticeable improvement in handwriting across the class — well done, Maple Class! A big thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support with letter formation practice at home.

In History, we have been learning that exploration still changes the world today. The children discovered some modern-day explorers before taking part in a carousel of exciting 'exploration stations'. At the technology station, they impressed us with their creativity, designing clever inventions to help explorers in different environments. On the ocean station, they worked together to piece together a world map and identify the five oceans. At the space station, the children used Lego to build thoughtful and imaginative moon bases, considering what astronauts would need to live and work comfortably. Finally, on the environment station, they discussed and sorted images of what is helpful and harmful to our planet with great care and understanding.

We have also spent time rehearsing for our Harvest Festival this week, and all that hard work paid off with a fantastic performance for parents and our local community. The children sang beautifully and performed with confidence and enthusiasm. Year 1 and 2 truly demonstrated the Belsay values of confidence and collaboration- well done Maple Class! I am so very proud of you all!



Miss Dixon



Friday Flyer

Classroom updates- Alder class

It's been another great week in Alder Class this week.

In English, we have been creating our Writing Toolkits; planning, drafting and editing our non-chronological reports on the Anglo Saxons. I wonder if any of the children told you some of the interesting facts we learnt. They created some wonderful reports full of information.

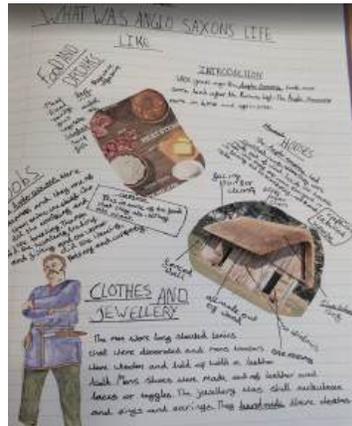
In Maths, we've been learning about column addition and practising making exchanges. We've done a lot of work on the layout of our addition problem this week, as well as some practical lessons to help us to make the exchanges. Next week, we will move on to making more than one exchange in our addition before looking at subtraction after half term.

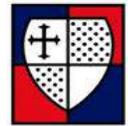
In RE, we have been exploring different promises made in the Christian church, as well as debating whether it is ever ok to break a promise. We had some wonderful in depth discussions, about times where breaking promises may be important to help look after or support a friend. They showed real empathy for one another in their discussions which was lovely to see.

In PSHE, we have been considering how we can tell how people feel by looking at the expressions on their faces and what we can do to support one another when we notice someone is feeling sad. The children came up with some fantastic ways that they can help to support one another.

On top of all of this, we are so proud of all of the children who took part in our Harvest Festival today. Many of you stepped a long way out of your comfort zones and all of you performed confidently and enthusiastically. Well done for showcasing our school values so well.

Mrs Aynsley & Mrs Rutter





Classroom updates - Oak Class

It's been another wonderful and busy week up here in Oak Class.

In English, we've been putting our Writing Toolkits to the test as we planned, drafted, edited and finally published our diary entries, inspired by children's experiences of The Blitz. The results were powerful, emotional and packed with brilliant descriptive language.

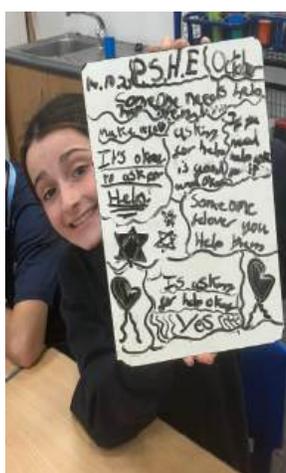
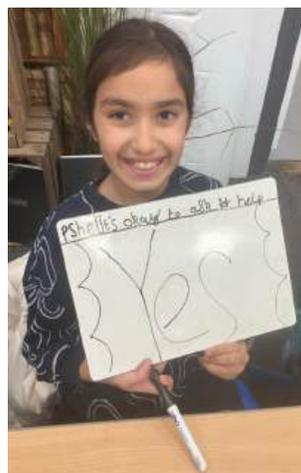
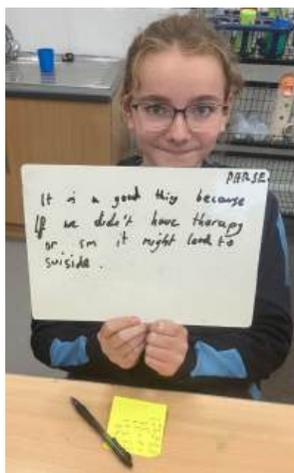
In Maths, we've been reasoning and problem-solving around addition before moving on to subtraction. We revisited some of our favourite concrete resources to help deepen our understanding, and the children have shown fantastic perseverance and teamwork throughout.

In History, we took a short break from our World War II studies to celebrate Black History Month. Oak Class researched and presented on some incredible figures who have changed the course of history, showing real curiosity, empathy and respect.

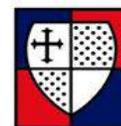
In PSHE, we explored the theme "It's okay to ask for help", thinking about how we can support one another and speak to trusted adults when we need to. The children showed real maturity and compassion in their discussions.

We have also been so proud of Oak Class for their wonderful contributions to our school Harvest Festival. Their enthusiasm, confidence and teamwork were fantastic to see and we'd like to thank everyone for their generous donations which will make such a difference in our community.

Thank you as always for your continued support. Have a lovely weekend and we'll see you on Monday.



Mr McLeod



School council

We're excited to share that our new School Council had their first meeting this week! The team have already come up with some fantastic ideas for the year ahead. Their first focus will be a litter pick next week, after noticing an increase in litter around the school grounds at lunchtime.

The School Council members will be introduced to everyone very soon during assembly, and we look forward to seeing them take on their new roles with enthusiasm.

Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
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



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 the red 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

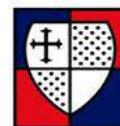
SCHOOL — KEEP — CLEAR

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.

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

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

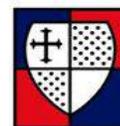
EVERYONE WELCOME

£2.50 PER FAMILY

Belsay Primary School

Friday Flyer

Belsay School



Belsay Daycare & Purple Haze Flowers

Wreath Making Workshop

Tuesday 9th December

6:30pm - 8:30pm

£35

Get into the festive spirit with this fun two-hour wreath making session led by Diane James. All materials provided. Takes place in School Hall & refreshments will be available.



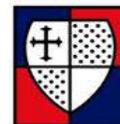
Contact Laura on 07834 828524
to book a place (£5 deposit required)

Raising funds for Belsay Daycare

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

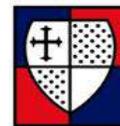


Ponteland RFC, Callerton Lane, NE20 9EG
<https://all-stars-sport.classforkids.io/camp/32>

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





**Treat your child to a day
in the forest this Summer!**

**HALF TERM HOLIDAY CLUB
Michelangelo's, Ryton**

Wednesday 29th October

10-3pm

Order a delicious Italian takeaway to be delivered to the woods! (£35 per day with own food / £40 per day with food)
Suitable for children from Reception age and upwards.



Activities can include campfire, s'mores, fire lighting, mud, sand and water play, outdoor crafts, mud kitchen, tools, hammocks, messy play, hill climbing and free time to explore.

Forest Adventurers is run by experienced Forest School Practitioners (DBS checked, paediatric first aid trained).

<https://bookwhen.com/forestadventurers>
<https://www.facebook.com/forestadventurers.co.uk/>
suzanne@forestadventurers.co.uk 07711 461 409

Contact us for
more information
if you're
interested in

Holiday Clubs

Parent and
Preschool Groups

After School
Clubs

Birthday Parties

Corporate Events

Sessions in your
Child's School

School Trips