

5th December 2025

Headteachers update

What a fantastic end to the week we've had here at Belsay! This morning we were treated to our brilliantly unique nativity performance, *I'm a Nativity... Get Me Out of Here!* expertly written and directed by Mr McLeod. It was an absolute triumph. The children were funny, confident, inclusive and utterly captivating from start to finish. The acting was superb, the singing was joyful, and the way they embraced each of their roles made it something truly memorable.

It's been wonderful to watch them rehearse over the past few weeks. They've worked so hard, supported one another, shown real resilience and then absolutely smashed it when it mattered. We're incredibly proud of each and every one of them.

A huge thank you to all our parents, carers, grandparents and family members who came along to watch. Seeing the hall full of smiles, laughter and pride genuinely means the world to us. Moments like this remind me how special our school community is.

I'd also like to take a moment to thank our staff, whose time, creativity and consistent high energy ensured today was such a success. The theme was certainly something a little different and once again shows how we're not afraid to do things the Belsay way!

This week, we also want to say a heartfelt thank you for the generous donations to our Shoebox Appeal. Your kindness will bring comfort, joy and a moment of Christmas warmth to people in far less fortunate circumstances. This is something that has always resonated strongly with our families and your generosity continues to make a real difference.

This afternoon, we rounded off the day with our Celebration Assembly so well done to all of our winners and of course, our hot chocolate superstars of the week!

Finally, a reminder that our Christmas letter has been sent out, outlining all the exciting events and activities coming up over the next couple of weeks. It's always a busy but magical time of year and we can't wait to share it with the children so please refer to the letter to keep you right and if you have any questions just get in touch.

Have a lovely weekend, everyone.

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 IN-GAME CHAT

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has been accelerated by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT

There are a number of ways that gamers commonly chat with one another online. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat, a group voice conversation that console users can have with anyone on the same platform. This tends to be more commonly used by players who already know each other. Finally, many gamers – especially on PC – will chat via a third-party app such as Discord.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to all players to use. Many games default to making it an opt-in function, but some don't, meaning a child could start seeing messages when the game starts, even if they're playing with friends, regardless of whether they know those individuals or not. While most strangers won't necessarily have ill intent, there are some who may behave inappropriately when chatting to a child – intentionally or otherwise.

DANGER OF GROOMING

It's been reported that some young gamers have encountered older players online who pretend to be a lower age to manipulate children, sending gifts in exchange for chatting and sending photos. Just as on any messaging platform, it's good to advise your child to avoid speaking to strangers or anyone that they shouldn't accept gifts from anyone online that they don't know.

BULLYING AND ABUSE

While some in-game chat can turn toxic because of how a match plays out, others turn that way because of people who engage in bullying – in essence, behaving in an offensive and abusive way simply to cause pain or get it out of whoever they're talking to. These 'tricks' often lean on racial slurs, anti-LGBT sentiment and other harmful rhetoric; they normally feel most comfortable prying on younger, more impressionable gamers.

POTENTIAL FOR PRIVATE CHAT

If a player would like a re-touch with a stranger after meeting them in the game, they can send a friend request, or use the party chat together in the future. For the most part, this is harmless – but it might lead to messages being exchanged in private. This could then escalate to the sharing of private information, and potentially attempts to manipulate or scam younger players.

COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE

Certain games are very competitive, and players can sometimes get upset if they feel a teammate is underperforming; an opponent wins unfairly, or they're just a bad loser. This can lead to unhelpful messages that stray away from playful trash talk and wander into the territory of bullying. Some players have been known to get incredibly abusive in situations like this, and the impact of this on a young gamer's emotional wellbeing could be severe.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT

In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows children to play without risk of contact from strangers – but it will need to be done in each individual game, and chat appears in the corner of the screen in many titles, so it's normally easy to tap or click, glance and see what's being said. With voice chat, explain to children what behaviour is inappropriate, so they can spot the strangers themselves.

REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS

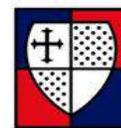
Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag an offence as potentially harmful. This normally leads to the account not being touched with yours in the future and, if that person's conduct makes any of the game's rules, they may be banned from playing entirely. This is done within the game itself, so each title has a slightly different process, but these tend to be designed for simplicity.

CONSIDER OTHER CHAT OPTIONS

If a child wants to play with people they know, consider using party chat or a third-party service like Steam. This allows everyone involved to chat on a private server, and even enjoy each other's company while playing different games. It's also far more secure, as anyone looking to join will need to request and be granted access – normally by whoever is hosting the chat.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Make sure children understand the difference between being competitive and being abusive. Talk about what constitutes consent in inappropriate behaviour from strangers online, so they feel that if anything ever concerns or worries them, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Empower children to identify the rules of in-game chat for themselves and reassure them they won't get in trouble for seeking help if anything goes wrong.



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.

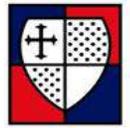
Current Whole School attendance is 94.95%. Our **NEW** target for Whole School Attendance is 95%.

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Willow	95.71%	96.69%
Maple	88.08%	95.02%
Alder	95.20%	93.24%
Oak	100%	96.27%

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 end to the week! Our Nativity was a true celebration of the children's talents. Their beautiful singing, confident performances, and calm stage presence made them absolute SUPERSTARS. It was a joy to see them shine and to share such a special moment with families. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend and to all families for providing a costume. Without your support it would not have been possible to showcase the talent we have in Willow class.

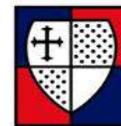
We have now begun our Christmas activities, and the classroom is already filled with a sense of excitement and wonder. One of our favourite moments this week was working together to set up the Christmas tree. The children approached the task with real enthusiasm, carefully choosing where each decoration should go. There was a lot of discussions taking place. We have also had the arrival of Elfie this week. Thankfully he is a very helpful elf and doesn't cause any mess in the classroom. I have enjoyed hearing all about the elves at home and the chaos they have been causing!



Amid all the excitement, the class has continued to work with real commitment during their focus tasks. Their determination to stay engaged, even with so much going on, has been impressive and shows how much they are growing in independence. Well done Team Willow!

The countdown to Christmas has officially begun! The children are embracing the season with enthusiasm, curiosity and plenty of festive cheer. We are looking forward to seeing what the next few weeks have in store for us.

Have a wonderful weekend! **Miss Houghton**



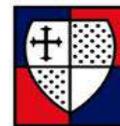
Classroom updates - Maple Class

Maple Class has been full of festivities as we welcomed the first week of December! Each morning began with great excitement as the children opened our class advent calendar, and our afternoons were spent rehearsing enthusiastically for the school nativity. All their hard work truly paid off as the performance was a fabulous success. The children brilliantly showcased our school values of confidence and collaboration, putting on an amazing show for parents and carers. We also enjoyed getting creative by decorating Christmas ornaments to hang proudly on the school tree for everyone to admire.

In the classroom, Year 1 and 2 have been busy learners. In Maths, we explored 2D and 3D shapes, practising how to name them and count their sides and corners. In English, the children planned their next Big Write by creating writing toolkits for a fact file about space—they are excited to use their fantastic facts next week! Our weekly Geography lesson focused on comparing transport in rural and urban areas, helping the children understand how and why travel differs between these environments. It has been a wonderfully festive and productive week in Maple Class!



Miss Dixon



Classroom updates- Alder class

Alder Class have enjoyed getting into the Christmas spirit this week. We were especially excited to open our Advent Calendars each day and to see where the elf had moved to overnight! We have been rehearsing hard for our nativity performance today and it has been lovely to see the class supporting each other throughout the rehearsals and the joy on their faces as they perform. You were all absolutely fantastic this morning - we're so proud of each and every one of you.

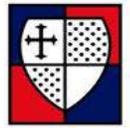
Despite all of the Christmas festivities, we have continued to focus hard on our learning, starting our multiplication topic in maths this week. We have learned about equal groups and how to make our own arrays. In English, we have been using our science knowledge to plan a non-chronological report on a group of animals. This week, our focus was on amphibians - I wonder if the children can remember any of the fascinating facts that we have researched. In RE we have been learning about how Christians try to follow Jesus caring and kind example. This afternoon, we are learning about The Children's Society and the fantastic work that they do. We will finish off with creating our own small Christingles.

Well done this week Alder Class. You have done an amazing job at remaining focused on your learning whilst still well and truly getting into the Christmas Spirit. We are looking forward to our DT week next week. Finally, a huge thank you to all of you for your continued support bringing in fantastic costumes and watching our Christmas performance this morning. The children were so excited to share it with all of you.

Have a wonderful weekend everyone.



Mrs Aynsley & Mrs Rutter



Classroom updates - Oak Class

It has been another cracking week in Year 5 and 6. In English we brought together all of our hard work from the last few weeks and completed our Monologue Big Write. The children really impressed us with the way they used emotion, flashbacks and powerful language to bring their characters to life.

In Maths we have pushed further into abstract strategies for multiplying two digits by two digits. The resilience and focus shown has been brilliant and the class are starting to feel much more confident choosing the most efficient method for different calculations.

In Computing the children spent the afternoon, on Wednesday, reviewing online videos and thinking carefully about how creators use structure, visuals and sound to engage their audience. They had great conversations about what makes content safe, appropriate and purposeful.

In RE we reflected on the phrase "What Would Jesus Do?" and explored how Christians use this question to guide their choices when life becomes challenging. The children shared thoughtful examples of how following Jesus' example might shape decisions in everyday situations.

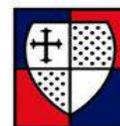
In PSHE we discussed why effort has to be replicated in relationships and how kindness, communication and forgiveness help friendships grow stronger over time. The class were open, reflective and incredibly mature.

Our Christmas rehearsals have really stepped up a level. The dress rehearsals looked amazing and our Year 5s and 6s have led from the front in both their acting and their singing. This morning's performance was brilliant and we are so proud of every single child.

Thank you for your continued support and it was lovely to see some of you at the performance this morning. Have a great weekend and we will see you on Monday.



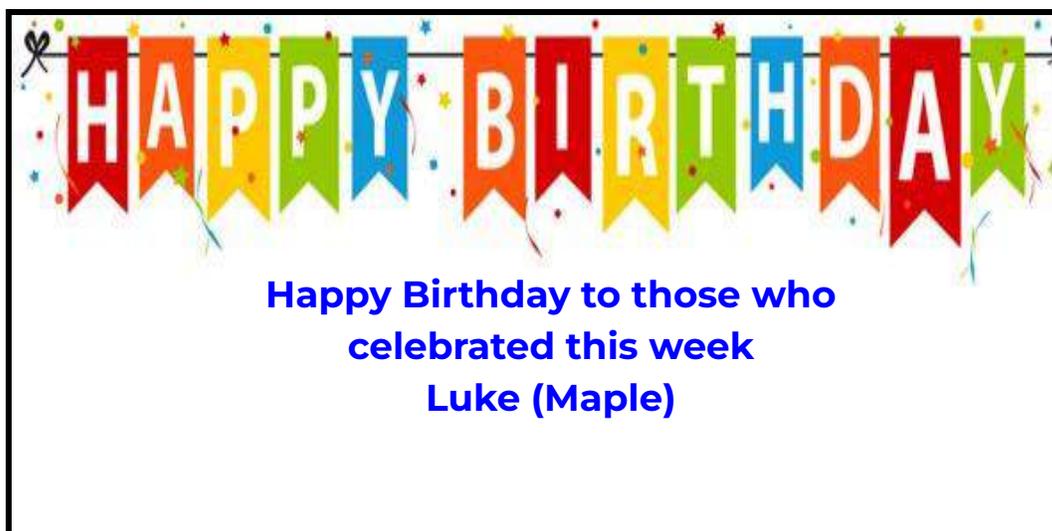
Mr McLeod



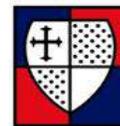
Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
Wednesday 10th December	All day	Non uniform day - bring a bottle for the PTA Christmas Jingle
Friday 12th December	All day	Christmas lunch and jumper day
Monday 15th December	3.15pm	PTA Christmas Jingle
Tuesday 16th December	8:30am	Whole school trip to the Pantomime
Wednesday 17th December	Afternoon	Alder and Oak Christmas party
Thursday 18th December	Afternoon	Pele Trust Christmas Concert at St Mary's Church (for those in choir and band)
Thursday 18th December	Afternoon	Willow and Maple Christmas party
Friday 19th December	1.15pm	School closes for the holidays



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, including a person on a bicycle, a person in a wheelchair, a person pushing a stroller, and several children. To the right of the school is a triangular warning sign with a red border and a white background, showing two children walking, with 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 a driver and passengers. 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

A flyer for a Christmas service. The background is a dark blue night sky with white stars and a bright yellow starburst. On the left, there is an illustration of an angel with white wings and a halo, and a lit red and orange Christmas candle with colorful beads. The text is centered and reads:

*Joy
To The World*

FAMILY CHRISTINGLE
SERVICE
4PM

BOLAM CHURCH

SUNDAY 7TH DECEMBER

ALL WELCOME!

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

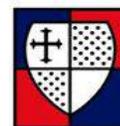
EVERYONE WELCOME

£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

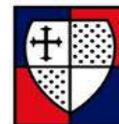
£35

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



Friday Flyer



LOVE RUGBY SERIES

A nationwide series of **girls-only** festivals, joining up girls aged 8-11 new to rugby with those already playing for a fun, friendly and positive experience

Key Information

- 40+ festivals taking place from November to June
- Girls in U9-U11s (Year 4-6)
- All abilities welcome
- Coaching workshops and game play

Kick-off Events

Date	Location	Time
13/12/25	Kingston Park Stadium – Home of Newcastle Red Bulls	10am-12pm

Want to join in?

1. Find an event you are interested in
2. Sign up using the link below
3. Keep an eye out for upcoming events on findrugby.com



Sign-up to your local event here !