

6th February 2026

Headteachers Update

What a lovely week we've had in school. There has been such a positive atmosphere around Belsay and it's been wonderful to see the children working hard, supporting one another and continuing to show the values we are so proud of.

We began the week in assembly by looking ahead to Children's Mental Health Week next week. We talked with the children about the important message that it's *okay not to feel okay* all of the time. We discussed what we can do when we feel this way, who we can talk to and how we support one another in school.

The children are very familiar with our Zones of Regulation, and many of them will be able to explain this to you at home. The four colours help children recognise how they are feeling and what might be causing those feelings. This is a really useful way to start conversations at home too, especially as we head into a week focused on mental health and wellbeing.

A huge well done to our Year 6 pupils, who have completed their mock SATs this week. They have worked in full test conditions, which is no small challenge and they have shown incredible focus, resilience and determination throughout. We are extremely proud of the way they have approached the week. It has given them a valuable experience ahead of the real tests in May, after which we can look forward to a fun and memorable end to their time at Belsay.

We were also visited this week by a member of the Pele Trust Executive Team, who spent time looking at personal development across school. They left full of positivity about the work happening here and the way we support children to grow into confident, thoughtful and responsible young people. You may have seen the infographic shared on ClassDojo this week, which shows how we 'Develop the Character' at Belsay and what this means for your child as they move through school.

As always, we ended the week with our celebration assembly and hot chocolate treat. Well done to all of our winners, it is always a pleasure to recognise the many fantastic things happening across school each week.

Finally, a reminder for families of children in Years 3-5 attending the Newby Wiske residential: we have a parents' information evening next week. Please make sure this is in your diary. Children are very welcome to attend with you so everyone feels fully prepared and excited for the trip.

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 SCAMS AND FAKE NEWS

"Fake news" refers to falsified or misleading material presented as a legitimate account of events. It's often used by malicious actors online to push an agenda, or even by criminals as a way of making scams more persuasive. Scammers can trick us into handing over personal information, security details and even our hard-earned cash.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- "CLICKBAIT" PHISHING SCAMS**
A message arrives saying "Have you seen the video of your dad?" or you might be sent an attention-grabbing headline about a celebrity that's been shared on social media. This kind of "bait" is produced by scammers to drive us to click on an unsafe link, where malware could be downloaded to our devices. These scams rely on our curiosity and our "need-to-know" instinct.
- FALSE FRIENDSHIPS**
Scammers often pretend to be someone they're not to gain their victims' trust. They might attempt to convince any children they connect with that they're a child of similar age with shared interests. Warning signs include a high volume of messages (often with an excessive tone), secrecy, inappropriate levels of intimacy, guilt tripping, emotional manipulation, threats or blackmail.
- SALES, DEALS & DISCOUNTS**
Some scams appear as adverts, offering a chance to buy something - such as designer products, expensive gadgets or tickets to a popular show - at a reduced price. Such plays often include a time limit or countdown, urging us to hurry as we don't miss out on the deal. This pressure encourages us to input personal details or payment information before pausing to check if it's legitimate.
- PANIC MODE**
To trigger a sense of panic, scammers may claim that a child's account has been hacked, or a virus has been installed on their device, or a number of other scary scenarios. They may claim to be able to fix the problem or offer a solution - if the child hands over control of the device or sensitive information, similar scams involve impersonating a friend or relative, claiming that they're in trouble and need help.
- YOU'RE A WINNER!**
This kind of scam involves fake giveaways, opportunities or breaks. It could be a message saying we've won a prize draw or competition. Or it could be a gift, free trial, bonus credit, and so on. It might claim that a package or refund is waiting. All these techniques are used to prompt us to share our personal information, thinking that there's something to be gained by doing so.
- FAKE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS**
Impersonating influential people online is a common tactic for scammers, who can use technology to create fake photos, audio and even videos that look authentic. These can be used to convince us, for example, to buy products, sign up for so-called "business opportunities" or invest in cryptocurrency schemes - all of which are loss or otherwise malicious. Many scams also involve the impersonation of popular celebrities' social media accounts, as well as those of individuals.

Advice for Parents & Educators

- STAY INFORMED**
Stay up to date with the latest information and best practice on cyber-security. See what scam stories are reported in the news and make note of what tactics were used. Keep up with young people's digital lives: talk about what they're doing online and use properly endorsed resources to learn what risks certain sites and apps pose to their younger users.
- TALK TOGETHER**
Chat often and openly with young people about fake news, online scams and how they look out for them. Encourage them to talk to you about anything they're unsure of or worried about online. If a child claims to have been scammed, don't pass judgement. Steering the victim away from asking you for help. Remember: adults are accustomed just to them, if not none.
- ENCOURAGE HEALTHY SCEPTICISM**
Most scams rely on emotional or psychological manipulation, tapping into our human instincts - whether that's to keep ourselves safe, help others, and others. Make friends, avoid being out or to someone something we really want. Encourage children to recognise that pressure to act and to always consult with an adult - especially if what's on offer sounds too good to be true.
- BE PROACTIVE**
Children increasingly use digital devices for education, travelling, shopping and play. Don't wait for a problem to arise before you discuss the risk of scams, false information and fake news. Highlight what to look out for and clearly communicate under what circumstances the child ought to speak to an adult. Finally, ensure that they're aware of the support services that are available to them (such as Childline).



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 94.94%. Our **NEW** target for Whole School Attendance is 95%.

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Willow	98.8%	96.6%
Maple	92.2%	94.8%
Alder	98.4%	94.3%
Oak	98.8%	97.4%

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.



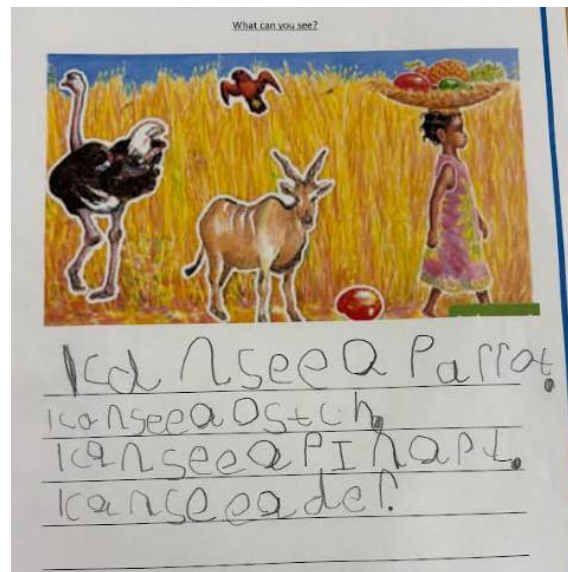
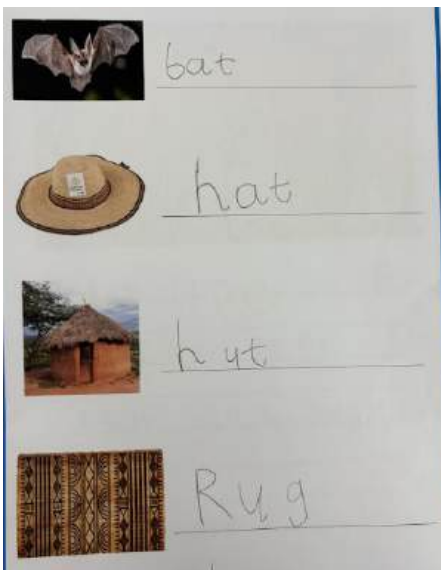
Classroom updates - Willow Class

Our focus story this week has been *Handa's Surprise*. We have explored using the story as a starting point to compare the Arctic and Africa. The children showed great curiosity as they discussed similarities and differences between the two environments. Quote of the week from Theo "I wish we lived in Africa because it just rains a lot in this country at the moment!"



In PSED we carried out a handwashing experiment to investigate why washing our hands is so important. The children were highly engaged and developed a clear understanding of how germs can spread and how we can keep ourselves healthy. We have various slices of bread in sealed bags in our classroom and we are looking forward to observing what happens next!

I have also been incredibly proud of the children's amazing writing this week. They have been applying their phonic knowledge with growing confidence, and their progress is clear to see.



Let's get ready for the final week of Spring !! Thank you for your continued support. Have a lovely weekend.

Miss Houghton



Classroom updates - Maple Class

This week in Maple Class, we have had a big focus on PSHE. With Miss Checkley, we explored the idea that all feelings are important, discovering how emotions can show themselves in our minds and through our body language. We also talked about the people we can speak to when we are experiencing different feelings, helping us understand how to share and support one another.

We also launched our school's linking project and created identity maps inspired by our class favourite book, *Incredible You*. Through this activity, we learnt lots about ourselves and each other, celebrating the things that make us unique. This year, we are linking with Cullercoats Primary School and are excited to share our work, exchange messages, and meet our link class virtually via video call. We can't wait to send our identity maps and hope to receive something special from them in return soon.

In English, we began studying our new class text, *Blown Away* by Rob Biddulph. We made predictions, clarified new vocabulary, and wrote questions about the illustrations before reading the humorous story. In Art, we continued exploring the work of Piet Mondrian and Alma Thomas, learning how lines and shapes can organise a painting and that not all art shows real objects. Our creative minds have been busy experimenting and expressing ourselves in new ways!



Miss Dixon



Classroom updates- Alder class



This week in Alder Class we have been working hard creating fantastic setting descriptions for Grendel's lair from our class text Beowulf. The children have been working at adding adjectives and conjunctions into their writing. Their focus has been incredible and they have produced some fantastic pieces of work.

In Maths, we have started looking at multiplying a two digit number by a one digit number. This has been a tricky process to learn and the children have met the challenge with determination and resilience. We are incredibly proud of your work this week. Well done.

In History, we continued to compare Viking and Anglo Saxon life, as well as considering that Vikings were Pagans and worshipped many different Gods. We enjoyed learning about the Gods and the different rituals that were carried out to worship them.

In RE, we have compared how Hindus worship and home and in the mandir. We learnt about the different Hindu deities and the meanings that they have.

In Science, we have continued learning about solids, liquids and gases as part of our states of matter topic. We now know about evaporation and condensation. We will be moving on to looking at the water cycle in our last lesson of the topic.

In Art, we had great fun experimenting with line and pattern using our wax crayons. We then chose watercolour blues and greens to paint over the top.

In PSHE, we have looked at the effects that drugs, alcohol and cigarettes can have on your body. We were able to debunk some of the myths in this area and discussed peer pressure and ways to say no.

It has been another busy week! We look forward to seeing you all next week. Have a great weekend.

Mrs Aynsley & Mrs Rutter



Classroom updates - Oak Class

Year 6 have completed their mock SATs this week and the focus and determination shown has been brilliant to see. The children approached every challenge with a positive attitude and should feel very proud of themselves. They completed three Maths papers and one reading paper and one Grammar paper and a spelling test and we were really encouraged by some of the results and the resilience shown throughout the week.

Year 5 have been working closely with Mr P on computing projects linked to Julius Caesar and have also been working incredibly hard on fractions in Maths. It has been lovely to have them together as one group and to see their confidence growing as they explain their thinking and support one another.

In PSHE we had some fantastic conversations around emotions and reactions with mature and thoughtful responses from the children. It was also lovely to welcome Mrs Blain into the classroom to see the brilliant discussions taking place and to offer some positive feedback to our wonderful pupils.

We also added a couple of extra drama sessions this week to build fluency and confidence in our Shakespeare performance and the progress has been fantastic to watch. In RE we explored how Muslims adapt their practice when living in Britain and the children showed great respect and curiosity when sharing ideas.

Thanks as always for your continued support and we look forward to seeing everyone on Monday.



Mr McLeod & Mr Pritchard



Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
Thursday 12th February	3.30pm	Newby Wiske Information evening
Friday 13th February	3.15pm	School closes for half term
Monday 23rd February	All day	School closed for teacher training day
Tuesday 24th February	8.45am	School reopens
Tuesday 10th March	PM	Shakespeare performance at Northern Stage
Wednesday 11th March	All day	Newby Wiske residential
Thursday 12th March	All day	Newby Wiske residential
Friday 13th March	All day	Newby Wiske residential
Monday 23rd March	All week	Scholastic Book Fair in school
Monday 23rd March	Various times	Parents evening
Tuesday 24th March	Various times	Parents evening
Thursday 2nd April	3.15pm	School closes for Easter

Happy Birthday to:

Roxana (Maple), Grace (Oak), James (Maple)
Wishing you all a fantastic day celebrating





February Half Term at Wildes Farm <https://wilde-farm.myshopify.com>

Wildes Farm Holiday Club

Do your kids love animals?
Do you want them off devices?
Do you need affordable childcare?



SCAN ME

Book Wildes Farm's award winning holiday club for Reception to Year 6 students, just 3 miles from Ponteland, running 9am-5pm Monday-Fridays in the school holidays (except for Bank Holidays)

- Enhanced DBS checked teaching staff
- Wide range of fun farm activities on offer - feeding piglets, stroking goat kids, cuddling chicks, collecting eggs, farm arts & crafts, farm games and much more.
- Beneficial for children's mental health & wellbeing as farm activities trigger the four happy hormones
- Inclusive holiday club who can support a range of SEND & neurodiverse children
- Private WhatsApp group provided for parents in which photos & updates are shared throughout the day
- £35 per day or £40 for the full week (works out as £3.50/hr)

<https://wilde-farm.myshopify.com>



Wildes Farm in the Community - Bringing the farm to you!

Are you a teacher looking to bring your lessons to life?
Would your core provision benefit from an engaging farming activity?
Could the nurturing effect of stroking animals help your group?



SCAN ME

Wildes Farm offer hands-on sessions with friendly farm animals, covering a range of science, history and PSHE objectives:

- Farming in ancient civilisations (Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings)
- North East farming heritage & traditions
- Farm animals - diet, habitats & offspring
- Where our food comes from
- Life cycles (birds and/or mammals)
- How animals help our wellbeing

Sessions are £10 per participant (staff are free) and run by a qualified teacher with enhanced DBS certificate. A detailed risk assessment is provided along with ongoing communication to ensure a personalised session for your cohort.

To request dates email wildefarmponteland@gmail.com or ring 07391035717



Darras Hall Primary School are looking for stall holders for their upcoming summer fayre, which all our Pele Trust schools will be invited to attend



for more information please contact:

pta@dhpschool.uk



Friday Flyer

A large, vibrant floral wreath made of various flowers including daisies, sunflowers, purple and blue flowers, and greenery, set against a rustic wooden background. The wreath is the central focus of the flyer.

Belsay Daycare and Purple Haze
Flowers present a

Spring Wreath Making Workshop

on Wednesday 11th March
6.30-8.30pm in the School Hall

£45 per person, £5 deposit
to be paid when booking.

To book please message Laura
on 07834828524

Raising funds for Belsay Daycare

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