



13th February 2026

Headteachers Update

As we reach the end of a very busy half term, it feels right to finish on a real high. There have been some wonderful moments in school this week and plenty to celebrate.

This week we have marked Children's Mental Health Week, which has come at a very appropriate time as our children are certainly feeling tired after a full and productive half term. We've been exploring emotions, thinking about how we regulate ourselves and recognising the different excitement and energy levels we see at this point in the term.

It has also been Safer Internet Week. We have spent time in classes discussing how to stay safe online and how to make positive choices when using technology. As always, you will find weekly online safety updates on our flyer. If you are ever unsure about an app, a game, new technology or anything related to keeping children safe online, please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are always happy to support and can look at running additional sessions for parents if helpful.

A huge thank you to Maria's mum, who joined us on Monday to lead a sign language assembly. This followed on from the BSL workshops she has been delivering in school, which have been extremely well received. We've had a fantastic turnout from pupils and it has been wonderful to see their enthusiasm for learning British Sign Language.

Our Year 6 pupils also had an exciting opportunity this week, attending a careers fair at Ponteland High School with Mr McLeod. They took part in a carousel of activities, met people from a wide range of professions and learned about the skills needed in different workplaces. It was a brilliant chance for them to begin thinking about future aspirations and the world beyond primary school.

We rounded off the week with our final Hot Chocolate Friday and Celebration Assembly of the half term, always a lovely way to recognise effort, progress and achievement across the school.

All that remains is to wish you a very happy and restful half term. We hope you manage to relax, spend time together as a family and fingers crossed, enjoy some improved weather so you can get outside.

Please remember that when we return, Monday is a Teacher Training Day, so we look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday morning at 8:45am.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and have a wonderful half term.

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

ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO CHOOSE RESPECT

Sometimes, differences between children can escalate into bullying, potentially impacting their mental health in a way that can persist into adulthood. While it's natural to disagree sometimes, teaching children the importance of respect is essential - especially in difficult situations. This guide provides strategies for encouraging considerate behaviour, even during a dispute, to foster a kinder, more inclusive environment for everyone.

- #### 1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

As adults, we play a crucial role in modelling respectful behaviour for children: they observe and learn from our actions every day. Be mindful of the way you interact with others in front of children. Keep in mind that you should always approach others with an attitude of mutual respect, even if you disagree with them. Demonstrating this behaviour can influence young people and help them to handle their own conflicts in a healthy way.
- #### 2 AGREE TO DISAGREE

Make sure children know that it's fine to have differing opinions - and that disagreeing with someone doesn't mean you can't get along or respect each other's point of view. Help them understand that sometimes we can 'agree to disagree'. Using active listening skills when doing this can also help to build empathy and understanding of others.
- #### 3 PROMOTE ACTIVE LISTENING

Teach children about the importance of active listening: that is, making a genuine effort to listen to the other person's perspective without interrupting, before responding in a way that shows you understand their viewpoint, even (or perhaps especially) if you disagree with it. This makes people feel respected and allows for a better comprehension of their point of view, which in turn can make it easier for you to communicate your own opinions to them.
- #### 4 ENCOURAGE THE USE OF "I" STATEMENTS

If a child finds themselves in a disagreement with someone, it can be useful to encourage them to use "I" statements during the discussion. Framing their thoughts and feelings using statements like "I feel..." or "I think..." can help them avoid an accusatory tone and encourages them to take responsibility for their own emotions.
- #### 5 FOCUS ON BEHAVIOUR, NOT CHARACTER

When disagreements happen, encourage children to focus on criticising and addressing the specific actions or behaviours that caused this upset, rather than attacking the person's character. For example, "I didn't like how you interrupted me" is better than "You're so rude". This can help children avoid hurting someone's feelings, which is likely to inflame the situation.
- #### 6 STAY CALM AND TAKE BREAKS

It's perfectly normal to feel upset during a disagreement - especially if it's getting heated. Remind children that if they feel overwhelmed, they should try to take deep breaths or even go for a short break to let their steam dissipate. If a conversation becomes too intense, remind them it's OK to suggest continuing it later or in a different setting. This can prevent things getting out of hand, allowing cooler heads to prevail.
- #### 7 START CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESPECT

Talk openly to children about what respect means - to you and to them. Discuss how they might show respect to each other, to friends, to strangers and even to people we might disagree with. You could use examples of considerate or inconsiderate behaviour in books, films or TV to open discussions about the importance of giving others due regard.
- #### 8 SEEK COMMON GROUND

When a disagreement has occurred between children, they may find it hard to move past it. You can support them in finding a more positive way forward by helping identify areas of agreement or common ground with the other party. This can help to build bridges between differing opinions and foster a more cooperative atmosphere, as well as preventing those involved from demonising each other.
- #### 9 AVOID MAKING THINGS PERSONAL

It's important that we make it clear to children they must avoid name-calling, swearing or derogatory remarks in a disagreement with others. Respectful language sets a positive tone and helps keep the conversation productive. Reminding children to stay calm and take breaks - as mentioned previously - can help them avoid getting too emotional and saying or doing something hurtful.
- #### 10 REFLECT AND LEARN

After a child has had a disagreement, encourage them to reflect on the experience and think about what they can learn from it. What did they handle well? How might they improve their communication skills to handle conflicts more effectively in the future? You could use role play, writing and drawing pictures, or hypothetical examples to further develop their skills in showing respect during a disagreement.



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	86.5%	96.7%
Maple	97%	94.8%
Alder	86.3%	93.9%
Oak	98.3%	97.6%

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

In Willow Class, our learning around Handa's Surprise continued this week. The children showed excellent engagement and growing confidence when retelling the story and exploring its themes. They are developing their language skills well and applying them thoughtfully across activities. We have really enjoyed reading the story Handa's Surprise and can retell this confidently.

We have been looking closely at our hand washing enquiry this week to look for any changes. We discovered that the bread that was wiped on the floor has got the most mould on while the one that was touched by clean hands had the least amount of mould. Our predictions were correct and we have been making sure we wash our hands correctly this week.



In PE, we were thrilled to receive a special Newcastle United kit from the Newcastle United Foundation. The children were very grateful to receive this special treat from Jamie.

We have worked incredibly hard throughout this half term. Now that we are halfway through the school year, it is clear that everyone is making strong progress. The children should be very proud of their effort, attitude and perseverance.

As we head into the half-term break, we wish everyone in Willow Class a wonderful and restful time. We hope you enjoy plenty of family time, opportunities to relax and a well-earned rest after such a busy half term. We look forward to welcoming the children back refreshed for Spring 2, hopefully with some brighter weather ahead to enjoy.

Miss Houghton

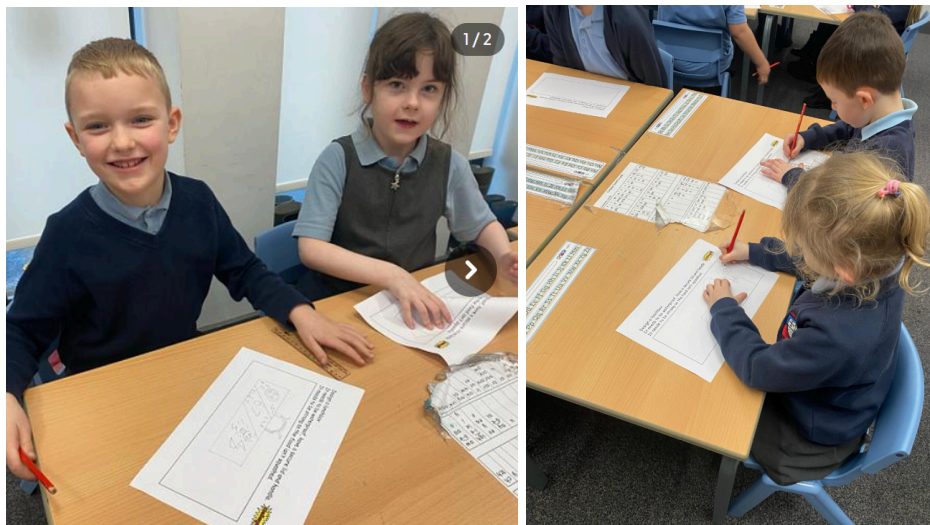


Classroom updates - Maple Class

We have had a super week to end the first half term of 2026! In English, the children planned and wrote their own independent weather reports. They worked hard to include ambitious adjectives, conjunctions and accurate punctuation. Our Year 2 pupils have been challenging themselves to use a variety of sentence types to make their writing even more interesting and engaging for the reader. We were so impressed with their confidence and creativity.

In Maths, both year groups have been busy developing their skills. Year 1 have been subtracting to find the difference, using practical resources and number lines to support their understanding. Meanwhile, Year 2 have moved on to multiplication. They have been making equal groups and writing number sentences to represent their concrete groupings, helping them to build a strong foundation in this new area of learning.

In Science, we have been exploring everyday materials and their properties. Our exciting challenge was to design a lunchbox that was fit for purpose! It needed to be waterproof and strong, as well as having a secure lid and a handle. The children thought carefully about the materials they selected for their designs, considering which would best meet the criteria. We were so impressed with their thoughtful ideas and scientific thinking.



Miss Dixon



Classroom updates- Alder class

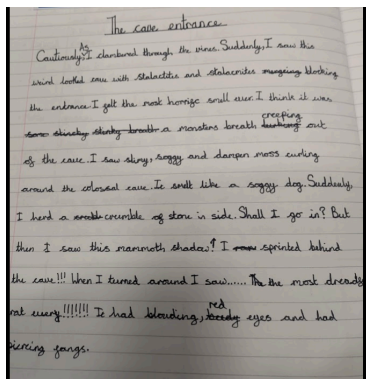
What an amazing final week to the half term we have had in Alder Class. In English, we started the week by finishing off our wonderful setting descriptions working hard to use strong adjectives, conjunctions and adverbs. Year 4, challenged themselves to use a variety of sentence starters to make their writing more cohesive. We were so impressed with their focus and creativity. To finish off the week, the children have begun to learn about non-chronological reports. They have been researching facts on bearded dragons, learning how to use bullet points and creating headings for key information.

In Maths, both year groups have been working hard to develop their understanding of multiplying two digit numbers by one digit numbers. Year 3 has begun to explore the link between multiplication and division, writing number sentences to represent areas. They are building some fantastic foundations for the rest of our unit. Year 4 moved onto division, beginning with dividing numbers by 10. They've made an excellent start.

We have had a very creative week. In Art, we were able to finish off our Anglo Saxon shields and attach our bosses. On Wednesday, we enjoyed drawing our happy places as part of our focus on Mental Health Awareness this week. Finally on Thursday, we created our own Viking artefacts to support our learning on the legacy that the Vikings left to Northumberland.

It has been an amazing half term Alder Class. Enjoy your well deserved rest next week. We are looking forward to hearing all about it when we return.

Mrs Aynsley & Mrs Rutter





Classroom updates - Oak Class

English has seen us begin our brand new unit on speech writing using the powerful speeches of Brutus and Mark Antony from our Julius Caesar play as our hook. The children have loved exploring how language can persuade an audience and we are already seeing some confident ideas developing. In Maths both year groups are now fully immersed in fractions with their respective teachers and continuing to apply the four functions with increasing fluency and confidence. There has been some fantastic resilience shown when tackling more complex reasoning problems.

Science this week saw Mr P bring our Evolution and Inheritance unit to a close with a focus on plants and adaptation. The children made thoughtful links between environment survival and inherited characteristics and showed how much knowledge they have built across the unit.

In RE we concluded our Islam in Britain unit with mature discussions about how Islam has become part of British society and how British culture has influenced Muslim communities in return. The quality of conversation and respect shown during these lessons has been something to be really proud of. Our History work focused on researching and presenting how Northumberland played its part in the English Civil War. The children enjoyed uncovering the local connections and presenting their findings with confidence.

Year 6 were absolutely outstanding representatives of our school at the PELE Trust Careers Fayre at Ponteland High School. Their behaviour, engagement and curiosity were exemplary and it was lovely to see them mixing so confidently with other schools across the trust. Year 5 also shone this week acting as brilliant peer mentors during Mr A's orienteering afternoon supporting our younger children with patience, encouragement and real leadership.

Thank you all for an amazing half term. Your continued support makes such a difference and we are incredibly grateful. Have a lovely and well deserved break.



Mr McLeod & Mr Pritchard



Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
Monday 23rd February	All day	School closed for teacher training day
Tuesday 24th February	8.45am	School reopens
Friday 6th March	All day	World Book Day - Dress down day in Pyjamas
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
Friday 20th March	All day	Comic Relief - Dress Down Day
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:

Frankie (Alder), Henry (Alder), Ralph (Alder), Laurie (Maple), William (Alder)

🎈🎂 Wishing you all a fantastic time celebrating 🎁🎉



February Half Term at Whickham Thorns



Whickham Thorns

ADVENTURE HOLIDAY CLUB

Looking for childcare this half term?
There's endless fun at Whickham Thorns Adventure Club!

A full day of action-packed fun where kids get to try a brilliant mix of activities such as climbing, laser tag, snow tubing, archery, bushcraft, high ropes and assault courses!

Whickham Thorns Activity Centre
Gateshead, NE11 9NX

BOOK NOW



For more information, please [click here](#)



Friday 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