



# NCEA Warkworth Primary School

## Spring 2 Newsletter

### Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family had a peaceful half-term and that you are enjoying the longer days and warmer weather as much as my family and I have been.

As those of you who have known the school far longer than me will know better than I (!), the school was once a very tiny village first school. We are proud of these roots and that small school, every adult knowing every child, family-feel remains at the heart of our ethos.

However, the school has been a primary school for some years now and its journey towards being fully one class per year will finish in the next eighteen months as survey work towards an additional classroom and intervention space begins. I look forward to sharing further details and having essential family and pupil voice in the process.

More short term, however, this coming term is another busy but exciting one. Our Early Years children have been excitedly watching Mr Victor work tirelessly to complete the new shed and I now have a few quotes ready to go for our new library, hopefully ready for September if all goes well.

Alnwick



Bamburgh



Dunstanburgh



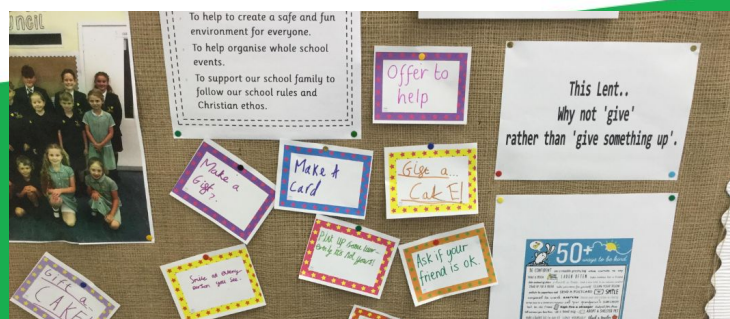
We commemorated the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday during the final week - even though the weather was atrocious and we sadly had to do it indoors (!), that was a lovely opportunity to think about how we might make better decisions ourselves and help others. Mrs Frater and the School Council are leading some fantastic work on Random Acts of Kindness which fits in very nicely - I look forward to even more courteousness from our wonderful children!

Speaking of the School Council, I hope your children have been excited about the relaunch of houses which they led on!

Whilst I, sadly, am not in one of the houses (in the name of fairness and impartiality of course), that is another example of how our school looks both backwards towards its proud history and what it historically has done well, as well as forwards to building pride and healthy competition amongst the children (and staff!)

I am very much looking forward to the next half-term. As always, I am happy to chat over anything, big or small - feel free to drop me an email, phone call or catch me face to face!

**Jonathan Booth**  
Headteacher



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## School CLUBS

### Clubs

Clubs are continuing to run from last half-term. We will be conducting some pupil voice about them in the coming weeks in order to gauge how we are doing and what we can do better! I am thoroughly enjoying my Debating and Philosophy Club as some of our older children work on the art of persuasion and formal debate, but I also hear many positive things about everyone else's.

Mrs Gibson's Walking Wellbeing Club appears to be a particular favourite, as well as Miss Dunn's Mindfulness Colouring, both of which are giving children an opportunity to talk about their feelings in a different way and space.



### Easter Service at St Lawrence's

We will be having a special Easter Service at the end of term on the final day, Thursday 28th March, for Years 1 to 6. This year, the final day falls on Maundy Thursday. We look forward to thinking about the traditions of this day with Rev'd Helen. Parents I have spoken to have been very positive about being able to come and it being at the end of the day for their work and personal schedules, so we will continue this. It will be held at 2:30pm, with children dismissed from church.

### Parents' Evening

It is Parents' Evening on Tuesday 12th March and Wednesday 13th March. Booking slots will be made available on Arbor early next week.

We will be hosting Parents' Evening in the hall this time, with families invited to wait inside classrooms where you will have more space. I will also have my own table, no booking slot required, on the Wednesday night if you would like to catch me about anything at all. (I sadly have an immovable meeting on the Tuesday night.) However, the Chair of Governors, Prof. Hobrough, will be in attendance on the Tuesday evening.

Families with children who have SEND and who attended just before half-term do not need to attend, although you are welcome to if you there are further things to discuss.

### Lunchtimes

As you are likely aware from previous communications, we have evolved our lunchtime provision considerably, from clubs to reducing the number of children on the yard at any one time. Alongside this, we have been focusing on further improving our dinner manners, from serving others first when pouring our cups of water to knife and fork usage. The children have responded very positively! We will continue to be on the lookout for this over the next half-term!



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## Educational Visit Costs

Just as we are aware of how many families across our community from all walks of life are struggling in these trying times, we are mindful about the costs of visits. We do our utmost to reduce costs and insulate families from paying as far as possible.

For instance, our local coach company ceased trading just before Christmas (we received two days' notice!). This meant seeking coach transport elsewhere for visits already paid for, often for higher prices given the short notice. We chose to take those costs from the school budget.

We are utilising our Sports Premium to pay for some incredible watersports activities as well as a fully funded residential for our leaving Year 6s. We pay for swimming lessons and ask for contributions to help with the high transport costs - for our Key Stage 1 children, this goes above and beyond the National Curriculum as part of our wider sporting offer. We will be requesting help from the local history society for transport costs for future history trips and we continue to use Pupil Premium funding to help eligible families.

Our requests for parent support are voluntary for all trips other than residential, but please note that, without such support from so many families, these trips would not be possible. Whilst remaining as neutral as possible, schools are increasingly having to do more with less money and our school is no exception with a range of considerable financial challenges.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support. If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to contact me.



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## Fundraising

On Friday 15th March, it is Comic Relief Red Nose Day. Children are invited to wear red and of course the famous red noses! We will be thinking about what the day means both through Worship as well as in classes, considering the history of the day and why it was set up, as well as the work the charity continues to do.

However, we are acutely aware of the cost of living crisis that is affecting families up and down the country as well as closer to home. Having thought long and hard about it, we have chosen to not request donations directly from families on the day - instead, families are warmly invited to [make their own donations](#) through the official website, as well as signposting to [Amble Food Bank](#) for a charity that works specifically in our local area.

We are currently looking closely at our school's Courageous Advocacy offer - specifically, how we as a school community help to better people's lives both in our local area as well as globally. Children will be, in conjunction with the School Council, considering which causes they feel are most important to them and thinking through ways to make meaningful impact, be that through raising funds, writing letters, campaigning, or making awareness.







## Cambridge University Visit & Careers

Years 5&6 thoroughly enjoyed their visitor from King's College, University of Cambridge, on the final day of term. After the visit from Oxford before Christmas, they are turning into higher education experts - our visitor remarked that they could name more university subjects than when she does talks for Year 12s!

The purpose of these visits is not just to raise aspirations and talk about famed institutions but also to encourage children to think more about their future. As discussed in some previous newsletters, we want children to be thinking more about careers earlier, from the academic to the vocational.

Hopefully, these last two visitors are the start of this work as we further improve our Personal Development offer. I have a whole section on my inbox for the many lovely parents who contacted me/Mrs Gibson to talk about their careers with the children which we are looking to launch very soon, so watch this space!



### An Introduction to University



## Safer Internet Day

### Internet Safety Day

During the first full week of February, it was Safer Internet Day. We held a special assembly on staying safe online and how to seek help. We particularly thought about how to spot strange changes on our devices, from videos autoplaying things they should not, to pop ups and settings changes as well as who to turn to for help. Children then did activities within their own classes relevant to their age group.

E-safety is an issue that I know many of you tell me can be challenging and it is something that we take very seriously at school. Our safeguarding consultants are providing some further whole-staff training specifically on this soon. As per the last newsletter, please do consult the following websites as they are excellent parent resources. Having seen first hand how nifty my not even two year old can be with a device (!), it is something we will continually be coming back to.

### Online E-Safety Resources for Parents

A great website for parents to consider [general e-safety matters](#).

[Official government guidance](#) on staying safe online.

[NSPCC guidance](#) to families.

[Safer Internet](#) which provides a wide range of advice to families.

[Guidance on WhatsApp](#) from another county's safeguarding board



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## Residential

Years 5&6 had a fantastic time at Thurston in the Lake District on their residential! From ghyll scrambling to canoeing, going through caves to taking a rather chilly dip in the lake, the children made us so very proud thanks to their perseverance and maturity! A special thanks must be extended to Mr Teasdale, Miss Fife and Miss Wright for going - it is never a peaceful experience for staff, especially at night (!), but I know they came back almost as thrilled as the children.

This was our first year to Thurston as we trialled making the Upper Key Stage 2 residential progressively more 'challenging' than Year 4's upcoming Ford Castle stay away, focusing more on putting children further out of their comfort zones. It was a tremendous success and we are already making enquiries for next year.

Families in Years 3, 4 and 5 have recently received a short survey about future residentials - the deadline for return is Monday 4th March!



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## National Science Week

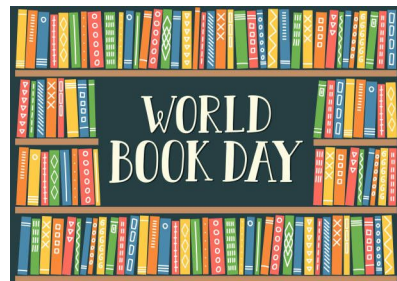
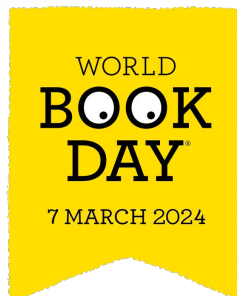
We are really excited for Science Week from the 11th March! There are a range of fun activities planned, including *live* sessions from real life farms, such as a day in the life of a farm vet to show Science in action.

The theme for this year is 'time', from considering seasonal changes to thinking deeply about what time actually *is*, alongside the role of time in experiments.



## Easter Crafts on 20th March

St Lawrence's will be hosting Easter Crafts for children on 20th March after school - we hope to see many of you there!



## World Book Day

At our school, we believe passionately in the importance of reading - not just because it helps make our children better academically and ready for future challenges in future schooling and life generally, but because reading is such a deep pleasure that all children deserve to have access to.

As such, we will be celebrating World Book Day with fervour! On Thursday 7th March, children are warmly invited to dress up as their favourite book character as we spend the entire day completing a range of fantastic activities with all staff and children involved! Details will be shared over Class Dojo.

## New member of staff

We are delighted to announce that Miss Ree has joined our Nursery team, replacing Miss Younger. She has already had a successful first week and here's to many more to come!



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## Playground Leaders

We will be launching Playground Leaders over the coming term. This is about enabling our oldest children to develop their leadership skills, as well as their capabilities to manage conflict (!) and to give increasing ownership and independence ahead of their move beyond our school.

The Year 5s are receiving training from Northumberland County Council around peer mentoring - understanding what it means to be a mentor and about the responsibilities around helping younger children.

As part of this, with the Year 6s, they will be helping to organise games outside, modelling best practice, encouraging children to take part in physical exercise and putting their PE knowledge into action.

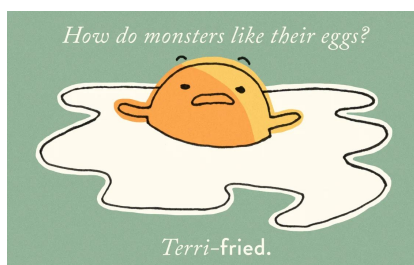
This is part of our wider Personal Development offer that we are honing extensively as we move from great to hopefully even better. We want children across school to improve their resilience, their emotional well-being and their independence. We are looking forward to seeing the results.



## Easter Egg Competition

Egg-citing news ahead! We have hatched a plan for the first competition for our new houses. In the run up to Easter, children will be invited to decorate an Easter egg with all entries receiving house points with higher amounts of house points for winning entries within each class - we'll be asking everyone to be an egghead and take part!

The competition will open in a few weeks and end on Wednesday 27th March so children do not need to get cracking just yet! Keep your eyes peeled on Class Dojo for further information soon!



## Year 6 Homework

The academy trust will be running a special competition for children in Year 6 who complete weekly homework starting soon - there will be exciting prizes and, of course, it's all part of good preparation ahead of Year 6 SATS!



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## Safeguarding Survey

Thank you so much to the roughly half of families who completed the safeguarding questionnaire last month!

Results were very positive across the board. Almost every single parent felt the school kept their child safe, that their children were happy, felt they could talk to both classroom staff and senior leaders, and that children are well looked after both in terms of mental health support as well as more broadly. Some questions were the same as the Ofsted survey last May and it was great to see that questions around behaviour and bullying were up from the already high point last year. These positive results have been shared with staff and the full details of all responses shared with the Chair of Governors, Prof. Hobrough, and the CEO, Mr Hardie.

Of course though, surveys also give things that need actioned or further explanation. I particularly appreciate the families that took the time to detail and contextualise their answers so we could investigate and take appropriate action with issues. Please find a short summary below of some of this.

You said...	We did...
One question about the tone of Collective Worship.	Collective Worship is for children of all faiths and none and we take great pride in uniting both the universal message as well as the Christian. However, this comment was shared with all staff, both those who lead Worship and those who take part from their seats, to recap the inclusive nature of Worship as well as to welcome challenge and suggestions about Worship themes. If any families want to discuss Worship themes, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me directly.
A small number of parents queried school meal varieties and healthiness.	We reviewed the school menu choices with the catering team. The school meets the <a href="#">DfE requirements</a> and the provision is audited by the academy trust catering team. There is an excellent, mixed selection of balanced meals every day. However, I spent some additional time observing children eat and I do think some work may need to be done with ensuring children exercise their choice to avoid repetitiveness! Some further investigation via pupil voice will be completed this year.
Three parents asked about what was happening with mental health support across school.	Children's mental health remains as high on the agenda now as it was in previous years. In addition to our social care student working with many children, we also continue to explore ideas around mindfulness, being grounded, and looking after our mental health (for staff as well as children!), from everyday interactions to planned sessions within classes and Worship, as well as our core value of 'Peace'. Thrive practice continues to be at the heart of what we do. We have worked hard to train staff up to work with children across the whole school in more specific 1:1 and group sessions for those with specific needs. However, we need to improve publicising our actions to the wider community and the survey results have resulted in putting children's mental health as a 'standing item' in our weekly whole-staff briefing.
Around 20% struggled finding key policies	The safeguarding section of this newsletter (and future ones!) now has hyperlinks to key policies that may be of note which should hopefully make this easier to find. Mrs Gibson has also recently increased the amount of safeguarding resources given to families via Class Dojo.
Four responses questioned behaviour	Whilst our children's behaviour remains excellent, after reviewing parent comments with staff, there was agreement that we could push to be even better, especially in transition points and outside. We have recently had a big 'push' on what our school rules mean in practice which seem to be paying dividends already. This is high on all staff's agendas.





## Safeguarding

Mr Booth is our school's Designated Safeguarding Leader, with Mrs Gibson, Miss Milne and Miss Fife our Deputy Leaders. If you have concerns about a child, you may contact any one of us. If it is an emergency and a child is in immediate danger, please call the police.

Members of the public can also report concerns to Children's Social Care directly. If you have a concern about a child, please contact one of the following:

- OneCall – 01670 536400
- Northumbria Police – 101 (in an emergency always dial 999)
- NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

There is also a secure online referral form available for you to explain your concern, if you are a member of the public.

**Keeping  
Children  
Safe**



## Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility



You can find copies of all school policies [on our website](#) as well as trust-wide policies on the [NCEA website](#).

For ease of reference, I will provide hyperlinks to the following policies if you wish to consult them:

- Attendance Policy [here](#)
- Behaviour Policy [here](#)
- Anti-Bullying Policy [here](#)
- Online Safety Policy [here](#)
- Safeguarding Policy specific to Warkworth [here](#) and the trust-wide Child Protection Policy [here](#)
- Trust complaints policy [here](#)

With my very best wishes,

**Jonathan Booth**

[jonathan.booth@warkworth.ncea.org.uk](mailto:jonathan.booth@warkworth.ncea.org.uk)



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February 2024			
Monday	26 <sup>th</sup> February	Return to school for Spring 2.	
March 2024			
Thursday	7th March	World Book Day	See this newsletter!
Friday	15th March	Comic Relief	Children can wear red and/or the Red Nose Day noses!
Week commencing 11th March		Parents' Evening	
		Mock Year 2 SATS	
		Science Week	See this newsletter!
Wednesday	20th March	Easter Crafts at St Lawrence's	After school
		Warkworth Music Showcase	Details to follow from Mrs Glanville.
Tuesday and Thurs	26th/28th March	Nursery Easter Crafts in school (Please attend only one)	1pm
Wednesday	27th March	Reception Easter Crafts in school	2pm
Thursday	28 <sup>th</sup> March	Final day before Easter holiday.	
		Years 1-6 Service at St Lawrence's, 2:30pm.	Dismissal from church.

April 2024			
Monday	15 <sup>th</sup> April	Return to school for Summer 1.	
Weds-Fri	17th-19th	Year 4 Ford Castle Residential	Information sent to families.
Mon-Tues	29-30	Years 3, 4 and 5 canoeing and paddleboarding	Details to follow on Class Dojo





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May 2024			
Monday	6 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank Holiday.	School closed to all pupils
Tues-Weds	7th-8th	Years 3, 4 and 5 canoeing and paddleboarding	
Week commencing 13th May		Year 6 SATS	Details to follow
Week commencing 20th May		Year 2 SATS	Details to follow
Friday	24 <sup>th</sup> May	Final day before May half-term.	

June 2024			
Monday	3 <sup>rd</sup> June	Return to school for Summer 2.	
Monday and Tuesday	3rd and 4th June	Year 5&6 STEM Days at Duke's Secondary School	
Thursday	6th June	Countryside Day for Years 3 and 4	Details to follow
Mon-Tues	10th and 11th	Y3-6 Kayaking and paddleboarding	
During the month		Year 4 Multiplication Times Table Check	Details to follow
Week commencing 10th June		Year 1 Phonics Screen	Details to follow
Week commencing 24th June		End of year reports published.	
Tuesday	18th June	Year 6 Leavers Service at Newcastle Cathedral	Details to follow
Thursday	27th June	Year 4 Lifepath Event	Details to follow
Friday	28 <sup>th</sup> June	Teacher Training Day	School closed to all pupils

July 2024			
Monday	1st July	Year 6 coasteering at Howick	Details to follow
Wednesday	3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Sports Day and Summer Fair	
Thurs-Fri	4th-5th	Year 6 onsite camp out.	Details to follow.
Friday	19 <sup>th</sup> July	Colour run and final day	