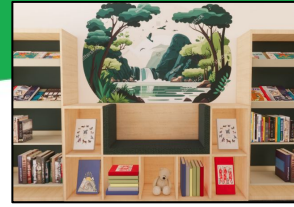




NCEA Warkworth Primary School

Autumn 1 Newsletter



Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to school to all our children and families returning and a particularly warm welcome to those of you new to school who are joining our lovely Warkworth community.

I saw such a mixture of emotions on Tuesday - some nerves and excitement across both children and staff, perhaps some rather relieved parents glad to see the school term begin again (!), and the joyous sight of new uniform shining in the September sunlight. Our Year 5s and 6s look so smart in their ties and blazers!

As always, the summer break is, for those of us in education, a lovely break and time to be with our families, but it also gives us that all important space to consider where we are at as both professionals and the school as a whole.

School priority number one is for us to continue as we are doing - just as I wrote in Autumn 1 newsletter last year, we will continue with our high aspirations and ambitions, particularly around providing challenge for children.

We actively want lessons to be accessibly difficult - we seek to stretch children to be the best they can be, no matter their starting point, and provide a well-rounded curriculum that provides them with deep cultural knowledge. That's a fancy way of saying build resilience and provide a grounding in classical education, be they fairytales, times tables, instrument tuition, Shakespeare, the sciences, our proud local history, and so much more.

We will continue our work beyond just the usual diet of National Curriculum lessons - resilience-building is as important within our Forest School offer to all ages, our range of extracurricular clubs, our residential offer to all of Years 4 to 6, the range of educational visits, special musical opportunities, and so much more.

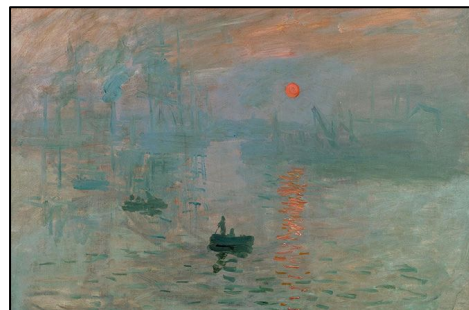
To give just one tiny example of this in effect, I have been starting each Worship this week with a classical painting - from Year 1 to Year 6, the deep interpretations they have offered has frequently astounded. It is another reminder to me to live out what we spent so long talking about on the training day - when we set the bar high, it is incredible just what the children achieve.

In other news, whilst I feel like I have written about our school library so many times now, we finally have a date set for the work to occur, which will be October half-term. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for everyone who ever donated a penny or more at the various Summer Fairs and Christmas Fairs. I have put a tiny sneak peek at the design above...!

I remain so delighted and proud to be the headteacher of this fantastic school as we go from strength to strength. When I caught a glimpse of the castle from my car the morning of the training day, it felt like coming home. And, to prove how much faith I have in our fantastic practitioners at school, my own daughter will be attending our 2s provision alongside her nursery in Newcastle (also thanks to my mum who lives nearby...!). I could think of no better place to send her - it would be full-time if we were closer!

As always, do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns and here is to the next half-term! It'll be Christmas before we know it...

Jonathan Booth
Headteacher





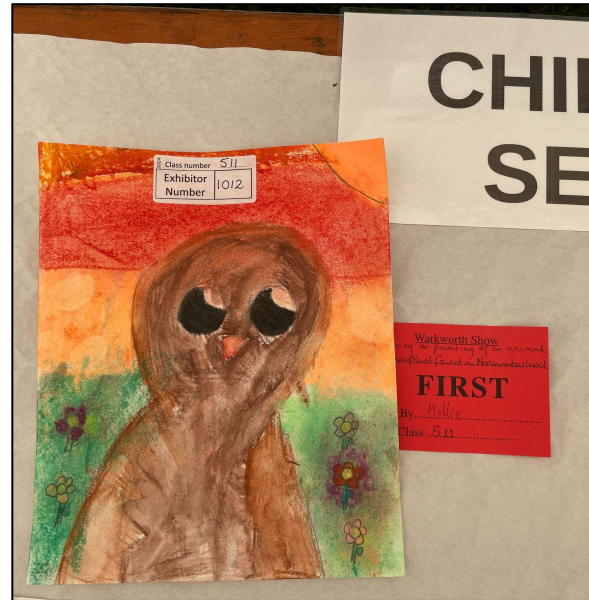
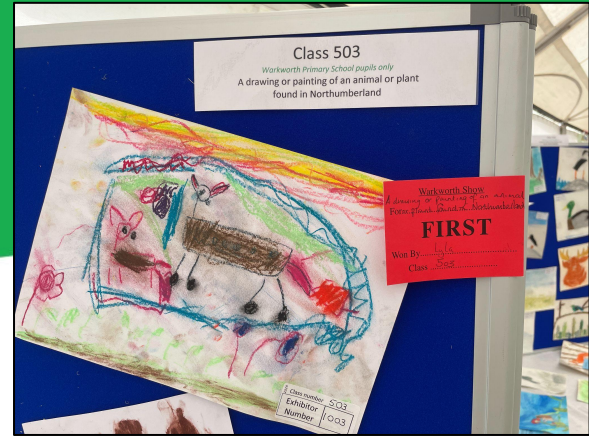
Warkworth Show

This year's Show was once again a huge success for the school - a new record of 130 entries in our special school categories, and some of our children winning in public categories against those from far and wide!

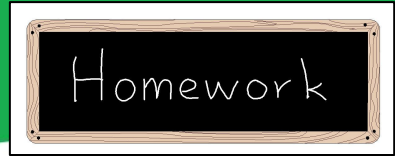
Winners will hopefully be pleased with their financial reward but, more importantly, it was so lovely to see Warkworth School, rightly, at the heart of the Show, right where we belong.

In addition to enjoying a roam in the castle with my daughter and bumping into many familiar faces, it was also lovely to reach out to other local institutions and build links, from the Women's Institute to those working on British Food Fortnight across the village.

Please enjoy a small selection of the work produced by our winners and thank you to everyone who contributed. We look forward to continuing this tradition for years to come.



Strive together as one. *Philippians 1:27*
Acts of love and good works. *Hebrews 10:24*



Staffing Times Out

As discussed at the end of last year, we have had a number of changes to some staff's working patterns. **Mrs Gibson now no longer works on a Friday**, meaning Miss Fife and I will be manning the phone and checking emails/Class Dojo for any urgent communications. Please be patient as we struggle without 'The Oracle' as I call Mrs Gibson!!

I now **teach Year 6 all day Monday** meaning that, if you need to speak to me on that day or attempt to email, I will be unavailable. I am very much excited to get back to the chalk face - it is always a pleasure stepping in to teach, as I did frequently last year, but it's going to be lovely doing so in a more planned, regular way! I also do some teaching and duties **on Fridays** but not all day.

Mrs Morris continues to work four days a week but changed her day off to a Monday. She will largely be focused on her SENCo role on a Tuesday morning. **Mrs Coils now works alternate Wednesdays**, but does every Thursday and Friday.

Some of these changes relate to personal changes whilst other are budgetary due to an ever-constrained financial situation, meaning we have prioritised (rightly!) ensuring that children are taught highly effectively over day-to-day school operations. All I ask is your continued patience and understanding as we get used to these changes!

Friends of Warkworth



As discussed in earlier newsletters, our Parent, Teachers and Friends Association is currently being re-established by Anna and Claire, mums of Isaac and Amber; Bobbi and Evelyn, respectively. It will be open to anyone associated either with the school or the local community. Watch this space for more information!

Homework, Clubs & Wraparound

Years 5 and 6 are trialling a few different electronic initiatives for homework purposes. I look forward to receiving feedback from families as well as children on how this is going!

Considering our homework offer in general is something I would like to gather family voice on over the course of this year - it is something that I will be mentioning to our new Friends of Warkworth (PTFA).

I must admit, having made homework changes in my last two schools, it is something that never pleases everyone! I am highly aware how busy families are and I am of the belief that formal education is the school's responsibility rather than something to be offloaded alongside the many other activities families do. However, I also recognise how much homework builds independence and how much of a shock Year 7s get when they see secondary school homework!

Alongside this, Miss Milne is trialling something else new this term - she will be running a **Key Stage 2 'Homework Club'**. This will be a space for children to complete work and seek any help and advice if they need it. It is also intended to take pressure off any families if you have had a busy weekend.

In addition, we have **reintroduced homework time as part of our After School Club offer**, meaning children can get support from staff in school and hopefully assist busy families with one less job to do!

We have also made our Breakfast and After School Clubs a more 'family'-type environment, encouraging cooperative games, painting, reading book time, and meaningful conversations both between children and between staff and children, rather than children playing on Chromebooks or watching things! We want to maximise any educational time children have in school, including in our Wraparound.



T: 01665 711369

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Road Safety

Upon one of my visits to school during the holidays, I was delighted to see Northumberland County Council hard at work putting in a safer crossing on Guilden Road as well as putting in the rather fetching pencil bollards!

I have made representations about the need for a crossing from the first week I started in this school after appropriately strong concerns from both families and residents about children's safety. Those of us in school, in conjunction with local representatives, have been as vocal as we can be! Whilst it has been a long time coming, it is absolutely fantastic to see it finally in effect.

In that spirit, may I please make some gentle reminders about road safety and appropriate parking:

- Please do not park or wait on the yellow zig zag at any time (between 8am and 5pm). Waiting on these lines (even if your child takes 5 seconds to leave the car!) is **against the law**. This is for the safety of our school community (for instance, if we had to request an ambulance).
- Please park considerately with respect to our local community. This especially includes not blocking driveways.
- Please do not park near to the junction on Guilden Road leading into West Close & Lysader Court. This is causing undue congestion and safety issues.

Thank you.

PE, Swimming and Water Safety

Last year, we were absolutely delighted with how our first year trial of PE changes went. Under Mrs Frater's leadership, PE has been strengthened in a range of ways. Children receive at least two sessions of PE a week and we know well how crucial it is for the mind, body and spirit!

This year, we are continuing with our youngest children receiving swimming lessons, something that is not typical amongst primary schools who often leave it until Years 3 to 6 to begin. Following parent and staff feedback, we have delayed Year 1 starting until later on in the year.

We will also be continuing with Key Stage 2 kayaking, paddleboarding and water safety sessions later on in the academic year, alongside the expert cricket tuition from Northumberland County Cricket.



School Council

Our School Council will also shortly reform under Mrs Frater, with applications and elections to occur over the coming weeks. The School Council will continue to make representations both within school as well as helping lead Courageous Advocacy throughout the community.



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Good Citizen Award for Maisie!

At the end of last academic year, I had one of the most delightful events in my time as headteacher here - attending the Amble Young Good Citizen Award. Maisie was one of the worthy winners after her incredible work raising money for The Princess Trust. As many of you will know, this started with Maisie wanting her hair cut especially short because she wanted to donate it to children who had lost theirs.

Maisie was such a worthy winner particularly because she is not one to seek the spotlight - she quietly wanted to do the right thing and, wonderfully, it has been identified by the local community! Maisie won lots of prizes and we got to meet many local dignitaries alongside the other nominees.

Maisie has made us so proud, representing her family and our school so well! Congratulations again, Maisie!



Parents' Evening and Open Classes

Consultations with parents will happen in week commencing Monday 14th October. Bookings will open on Arbor in the next couple of weeks. The meetings will be focused on how your child is settling in and early target setting.

In addition, prior to Christmas, teachers will communicate when there will be an 'open class' which will be a lovely opportunity for parents, grandparents and other family members to get 'stuck in' with their children in a lesson!

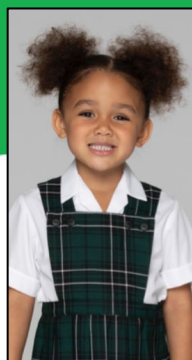
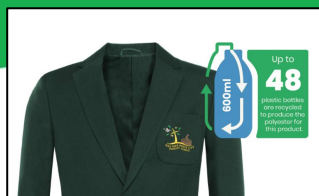


Lunch Time Clubs

Lunchtime Clubs were a huge success last year and will continue with our new staff also! They will mostly run from Week 4 of Autumn 1 until Advent, although some will start later (School Council, Choir) and some will go year round (Homework Club, Philosophy). Please see below for the full list. An asterisk means that families will not need to book ahead of time on Arbor.

Specifically on Choir, Miss Good is very passionate about singing! Whilst Janet and Jill from the church choir will be joining us after October half-term, Miss Good will lead a pop-focused singing sessions before the group will prepare for Choir performances which is very exciting! I was also delighted when Mr McPhail said he loved Chess, meaning that a Mr Teasdale-sized hole can be plugged!!

Mr Booth	Debating and Philosophy	Tuesdays	Y4-6
Miss Milne	Homework*	Thursdays	Y3-6
Mr McPhail	Chess	Fridays	Y2-6
Miss Good	Singing/Choir	Mondays	Y1-6
Mrs Stuart	Lego	Mondays	Y1-2
Mrs Coils	Mindful Colouring* (with Y6 Mentors)	Alternate Weds	Y1+2
Mrs Frater	School Council	Autumn 2, Weds	1-6
Mrs Morris	Arts & Crafts	Tuesdays	1-6
Miss Fife	Disney Calm	Thursdays	1-2



Uniform

The sight of children in their new uniform on the first day is always a lovely moment - I am sure I will blub when it's my own girl's turn all too soon!

We believe strongly that uniform is an important part of school life. It sets the appropriate tone for an educational setting, it builds a clear identity, and it also creates an equal footing between pupils and reduces pressure on parents to have a varied (and expensive!) wardrobe of clothes.

This week, we have been reminding particularly our Years 5 and 6 pupils about looking smart in their blazer and ties, tucked in shirts and setting an example to our younger pupils.

May we please remind families about our expectations in terms of **no smartwatches**, that any hairbands/bobbles be **plain, dark green, black or white** and that we do not allow oversized scrunchies, bows etc.

Parents of Key Stage 2 children will also have seen reminders about no nail varnish please - we in school do have acetone-free nail varnish remover. If children come to school with nail varnish, we will first send home a reminder about expectations then, the following day, have the child remove it in school if not at home.

The uniform policy will be updated next month with governors and the only major change I will put forward will be that we will make it clear that **flat boots are allowed**.

Thank you for your support and cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns, or any financial difficulties with uniform, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Gibson or I and we do everything we can to help confidentially.

Educational Visits, including Swimming

Back in Spring 2's newsletter, I wrote to families about some difficulties around the cost of educational visits. The school has incredibly limited funds for complex reasons, some of them to do with the government (!), some to do with our area, and some due to the fact that per-pupil funding is delayed meaning that as our school expands, the money takes a year to catch up.

Last academic year, we subsidised a range of educational visits and opportunities, from a Year 6 Camp Out to Years 3 to 6's Water Activities and Years 1 and 2's swimming lessons (with families being asked for the coach costs).

For most trips, we ask for voluntary contributions to help fund them as we have no other funds other than some ring-fenced for disadvantaged families. Schools have the right to cancel trips in the event of a shortfall but we have not done so - the vast majority of trips have faced a significant shortfall, with the school subsidising to the cost of many thousands of pounds.

The school has been told clearly that, due to our financial situation, this absolutely cannot continue.

Please may I implore families who have the means to make the voluntary payments otherwise we will have to start cancelling educational visits which is the last thing we want. This includes swimming coach costs for those year groups where we go beyond the National Curriculum entitlement, as the school is already significantly subsidising lessons which are genuinely very high-quality - the lessons in Amble are the best Mrs Frater and I have seen, and we've had to sit on the side of the pool for rather a lot of classes in our time...!

Thank you so much for your understanding.



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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 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

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We in school are setting dates for the whole year over the next few weeks. Autumn 2's newsletter will go all the way to the end of the academic year, including Summer Fair, Sports Day, end of year celebrations etc. If you would like to know these dates sooner than November, please speak to the office.

September 2024			
Monday	2nd September	Staff training day	School closed for all pupils.
Tuesday	3rd September	School reopens for all pupils	
October 2024			
All week	Week commencing 14th October	Parents' Evening Consultations	Arbor message to be sent shortly.
Tuesday and Wednesday	15th-16th October	Individual photographs of children.	
Friday	25th October	Final day before October half-term	
November 2024			
Monday	4th November	Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust training day	
Tuesday	5th November	Children return to school	
December 2024			
Tuesday	3rd December	Christmas Fair	Details to follow in Autumn 2 newsletter.
Wednesday	4th December	Christmas Dinner Day	
Monday	9th December	Years 5 and 6 Nativity Performances	9:20am & 3:20pm
Tuesday	10th December	Years 3 and 4 Nativity Performances	9:20am & 3:20pm
Wednesday	11th December	Christmas Pantomime for Years 1-6	Morning
		Early Years Nativity Performances	9:20am & 2:00pm
Thursday	12th December	Years 1 and 2 Nativity Performance	9:20am
Monday	16th December	Years 1 and 2 Nativity Performance	3:20pm
Friday	20th December	Final day of school before Christmas holiday.	