



# NCEA Warkworth Primary School

## Spring 1 Newsletter

### Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year, and a very warm (even if it isn't very warm currently!) welcome back to school. I hope the Christmas break gave you time to enjoy being with family and friends, wherever the season took you. I'm also very aware that Christmas can be a difficult period for some families for all sorts of reasons, so my hope is simply that you were able to find moments of rest, good food, and time with the people who matter most to you and your children.

We began this week with a staff training day focused on strengthening the [Warkworth Way of teaching](#) and learning. A particular emphasis was on metacognition: a slightly fancy word that really just means thinking about thinking. In practice, this is about helping children to become more aware of how they learn, and improving the way they explain their thinking out loud: how they choose strategies, why they use them, and how they know if something is working.

We also spent some time focusing on Early Years as a whole team, making sure everyone, not just our excellent practitioners in the cabin, know how the earliest educational experiences for our children are the most pivotal of all. Each teacher leads a subject, so all the teachers will be spending some time with the Early Years children in relation to their area of leadership, from 2s to Reception, getting to know how it operates.



While these training days are invaluable for helping us reflect, improve, and sharpen our practice as a staff, nothing quite compares to the energy of having the children back in the building. Seeing classrooms full again is always the real highlight of the week.

Looking back over last half-term, it is hard to believe that the Christmas fun was only a few weeks ago. From wonderful Nativity performances to the always emotional Christmas Service at church, it topped off a wonderful 2025 for all of us at Warkworth. There was the Christmas Fair, with Father Christmas clearing some time in his busy schedule to pay us a visit, and of course the Pantomime too which is fast becoming a new tradition for Years 1 to 6.

For this coming term, there is so much to come. There are exciting House competitions. More trips (including Year 6's residential to Edinburgh). Some exciting work around Careers to encourage high aspirations for all our children. The School Council's new outdoor provision purchased to enjoy on the yard. Further improvements to our excellent EYFS outdoor space. And so much more!

Thank you, as ever, for your support. Yes, that includes trudging through horrific weather to get your children into school, and the incredible word-of-mouth recommendations that mean we continue to welcome more children who are transferring to Warkworth, but of course most of all for the fantastic support to your children that we only hope to emulate. Here's to 2026!

**Jonathan Booth**  
Headteacher



**Not tossed with the waves, but speaking the truth in love, we will grow.**  
*Ephesians 4:14-15*



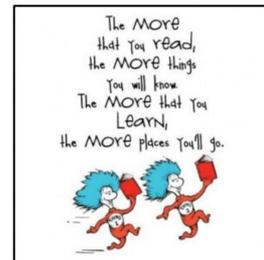
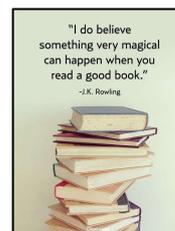
# WORLD BOOK DAY

5 MARCH 2026

## World Book Day Coming Up!

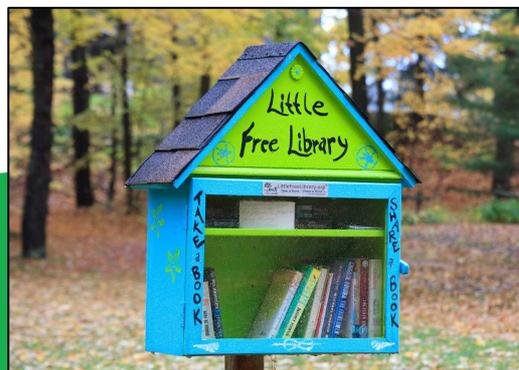
Miss Fife, as the school's English Lead, is very, very excited that World Book Day is fast approaching on **Thursday 5th March 2026**. Children will of course be warmly invited to dress up, inspired by a book character of their choice.

I know some of you will be as excited as Miss Fife, whilst others of you will be thinking 'oh no, I'll probably forget and have to buy something ludicrously expensive, last minute'. As ever, there is certainly no pressure from us for weird and wonderful things (!) - for us, it's a lovely day to celebrate all things books and, as a school that celebrates reading incredibly highly, we try to make it a fun experience to reiterate how important reading is not just for future academic success but also for sheer pleasure.



## Mini library in front garden

Miss Fife also wanted me to tell you that she will be looking at refreshing the mini library of books that stay outside by the front entrance. Any donations of books for this is happily appreciated (unlike our actual school library that is currently overflowing - a lovely problem to have!).



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## A BIG THANK YOU!

On behalf of the school, may I say a huge thank you to every single person who supported our Friends of Warkworth in 2025, but particularly its core group of Chair Anna Morrison, Treasurer Claire Gelson, and Mrs Frater who has lovingly agreed to support the FoW for one more year, even as she has moved on officially from our school!

There is of course the Christmas Fair which was a tremendous success, as well as the hot drinks and sweet treats during the Nativities, but all that money being raised must have a purpose. This is to fund things that ordinary funding channels do not make possible. The Friends of Warkworth Committee control where the money goes - us in school can only make requests which they carefully consider for impact. Upcoming and past projects include:

- Purchasing new iPads for class teachers so that the picture quality on Class Dojo is hugely improved.
- Subsidising the Pantomime trip significantly.
- Funding blinds in the hall windows to stop the sun going into children's eyes during Worship.
- Plans for improving the outdoor spiritual garden.

From all of us within the school, may we once again thank all the families for your pennies and pounds, and for the many of you involved with running the events big and small.





## 2s and Nursery

As you may be aware, the government now offers 30 hours free childcare from 9 months for the vast majority of working families. There is a strong push for schools to expand their Early Years provision and Warkworth has been 'ahead of the curve' for some time, having had 2 year old provision for many years.

From this term, we offer 30 hours, full-time places, as well as 15-hour places (Mon-Weds lunch or Weds lunch - Friday), not just for Nursery but also for 2s.

As a parent of a small child who now attends full-time school-based Nursery provision in Newcastle, I cannot recommend school-based provision enough. My daughter attended one day a week in the 2s here last year and the difference it made was remarkable. She attended a lovely private setting that was caring and nurturing, but the only adult she ever wanted to see was 'Miss Ringle' (that's Miss Pringle...!) and her language development over that time was truly tremendous, thanks most of all to the team here.

Regardless of where you send your own children, even if it's not our setting, speaking not as 'the headteacher' but more generally from my experience,, there is a huge difference between private 'childcare' and school. Children still play in schools, they have time to grow, they still get to sleep if needed (!), they still develop at their own pace and are loved and nurtured. However, schools prepare children to be school ready and it truly does offer a different experience that I would strongly recommend to other parents.

If you are interested in our 2 year old provision, please do not hesitate to contact us at school to arrange a tour and speak to us about what we offer.



## Caretaking

As you may know, our multi-academy trust advertised for a site assistant role across our school and another in Alwick. We were unable to appoint. However, the trust is now exploring a role purely at Warkworth. There is a strong degree of flexibility within the hours, with the job particularly flexible for those with families, those retired, or those working multiple other jobs. Whilst the advert is not out yet, if you know anyone interested, please do direct them to speak to Mrs Gibson in the office!

## Mothers' Day

As a school, we always treat Mothers' Day and its historic roots as Mothering Sunday very seriously. It is a lovely opportunity for children to recognise the special women in their lives, from mums to cousins, big sisters to grandmas, aunties to 'aunties' (the ones you only realise aren't related to you when you're much older!).

Staff who've been here longer than me remember lots of different ways we've done Mothers' Day and we spent time this week reflecting on the best way to celebrate with the children. We recognise that getting time off from your busy schedules can be challenging, but also doing things whole school with a small hall can be challenging - individual year group events could mean you only being able to attend one event and potentially having to 'choose' which child to see!

As such, whilst on this occasion we're not going to invite you in, let's just say that there are some lovely surprises coming... but I'll leave it at that!



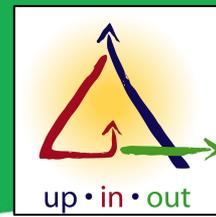
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A few highlights of last half-term!! **Clockwise from 11 o'clock...** Enjoying the snow (before it got even heavier in 2026!); our House Captains giving over the 972 items for Amble Food Bank which was our big House Competition; our exclusive Pantomime performance; the Warkworth Christmas tree where our School Choir performed; kindness pebbles for our spirituality space and the Antibullying Week video call on the power of kindness; Isla representing the school at Remembrance Sunday; Christmas Dinner Day!



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## Spirituality

When we talk about spirituality in school, we are not talking about promoting a particular religion or belief. Instead, we are talking about helping children to develop their inner life – their ability to reflect, wonder, ask big questions, and make sense of themselves and the world around them.

Spirituality includes things like:

- Wonder and awe at the natural world, music, stories, or human achievement
- Reflection on experiences, emotions, and relationships
- Questions of meaning, such as What matters?, What is right and wrong?, and How should I treat others?
- A growing sense of identity, belonging, and purpose
- These experiences are a normal and important part of being human, and children of all faiths and none naturally engage with them.

All schools are required to teach children ‘Spiritual, Emotional, Social and Moral’ education. We take all four of those elements very seriously, but this year we are thinking a lot about Spirituality. This helps children to:

- Understand themselves and others better
- Build resilience and emotional literacy
- Develop empathy, hope, and compassion
- Learn to pause, reflect, and think deeply rather than react instantly

It is **not** about ‘making children Christian’ - firstly, we have staff with a range of different beliefs, and Church of England schools encourage *encounters* with Christianity, explicitly being against ‘conversion’. We welcome wholeheartedly and with open arms everyone of all worldviews and faiths, from children to staff. In addition, spirituality is not the same as Worship.

As discussed in previous newsletters, we have lots planned to help with this, including mindfulness exercises, ‘mini pilgrimages’, and ‘spiritual moments’ within the curriculum.

I thought I’d also share with you one particularly fun thing we have tried, which is the staff team sharing music that means a lot to them spiritually at the start of whole-school Worship, using ‘In-Out-Up’ language:

- **In:** How it makes you feel inside.
- **Out:** How it makes you feel about other people, both close to us and not.
- **Up:** How it links you to something bigger than yourself, be that God, gods, or the wider universe.

We have then been inviting children to reflect on how it makes them feel - not just whether they like it or not, but how it makes them feel about themselves and the wider world.

Here is a small selection of songs we have chosen so far - perhaps you can guess who has chosen what?! In addition, if any parents want to share music that means a lot to them, you are more than welcome to email me and I can read your answers out in Worship!

Good Vibrations	<b>The Beach Boys</b>	Local Hero	<b>Mark Knopfler</b>
Life With You	<b>Kelsey Hart</b>	Canon in D	<b>Pachelbel</b>
A Dream is a Wish	<b>Ilene Woods, Cinderella</b>	Unfinished Symphony	<b>Massive Attack</b>
Hallelujah	<b>Tori Kelly, Jennifer Hudson</b>	Spring 1 (Vivaldi’s Four Seasons)	<b>Max Richter</b>
Agnus Dei	<b>Samuel Barber</b>	Nimrod	<b>Elgar</b>
For Emma	<b>Bon Iver</b>	Sinuun mina nojaan	<b>Aili Ikonen</b>



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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.



### Operation Encompass

The school is part of Operation Encompass. This is to support families experiencing domestic abuse. A notification is shared with the school to the Designated Safeguarding Leads if police attend a domestic incident where children are related to the adult parties present.

You can also find out more information regarding support that is available for adults and children [here](#) and [here](#).

### Operation Endeavour

This is a joint operation between Northumberland County Council Children's Services, Northumbria Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner to safeguard children and young people who go missing from home or care. Useful information and resources:

- The Children's Society: [www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-wedo/resources/protecting-young-runaways](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-wedo/resources/protecting-young-runaways)
- Missing People: [www.missingpeople.org.uk](http://www.missingpeople.org.uk) 24 hour confidential helpline: 116 000

## 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](#).

Particular policies you may wish to read and are most relevant to parents include:

- Attendance Policy (School)
- Behaviour Policy (School)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (School)
- Online Safety Policy (School)
- Safeguarding Policy, both the school's and the trust-wide Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy (Trust)





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Spring term		
<b>Tuesday 6th January 2026</b>	Children return to school.	Training day on Monday 5th January 2026.
<b>Friday 13th February 2026</b>	Final day before half-term	
<b>Monday 23rd February 2026</b>	Children return to school	
<b>Thursday 5th March 2026</b>	World Book Day	
<b>27th March-19th April 2026</b>	FoW Easter Egg Trail	Details to follow from FoW.
<b>Thursday 2nd April 2026</b>	Final day	Maundy Thursday service at church (Good Friday on 3rd April)
Summer term		
<b>Monday 20th April 2026</b>	Children return to school.	
<b>Thursday 21st May 2026</b>	Sports Day	Weather-permitting! It is earlier in the school year to allow some flexibility in timing.
<b>Friday 22nd May 2026</b>	Final day before half-term	Bank holiday on 4th May
<b>Monday 1st June 2026</b>	Children return to school	
<b>Friday 26th June 2026</b>	School closed	Training day
<b>Thursday 9th July 2026</b>	Summer Fair	Please note the date change - it was previously Wednesday, moved to Thursday.
<b>Friday 17th July 2026</b>	Final day	