

December 23



Issue 32

LIGHTHOUSE

Latest News from NCEA

“Let your light shine”

Staggering Generosity for
Wansbeck Valley
Food Bank

Celebrating Christmas
across
the Trust

Trust
Vacancies



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Goodness

Work hard, do what is right.
Treat others well.
Do good and serve others.

Luke 6:31, Galatians 5:22, Hebrews
10:24, Peter 1:5

Earlier this week I had the privilege of watching the Christmas performance at St Michael's in Alnwick, the newest school in our trust. It was great to see so many parents, carers and family members there to watch the children perform and share with the audience what Christmas is like in other parts of the world. At the centre of the stage, and showing great patience, were the youngest children taking their parts from the nativity and reminding us of the true message of Christmas.

A NOTE

from the

CEO

The best gift we give at
Christmas

It was a lovely performance and mirrors the celebration of Christmas in all nine of the schools in Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust. After the disruption of recent years, it finally feels that schools are back to the way we celebrated Christmas pre-pandemic. It has been great to welcome our children's families back into the schools and our churches to join the children and staff in celebrating Christmas.



I know that Christmas does not automatically bring joy to everyone, particularly as the image of Christmas in the media sets very high and materialistic expectations for a 'perfect' Christmas in terms of expensive gifts and Christmas food. This is always challenging for many people in our communities, but even more so during times of rapid increases in prices of more or less everything. For others, Christmas can be a lonely or difficult time and the stereotype image of a 'perfect' family Christmas is very far away from the reality faced by some of us on Christmas Day.

It is fantastic to make others feel happy through giving gifts at Christmas, but the reality is that in the future most of us won't remember much of what we received at Christmas. What we will remember is how we felt and the shared experiences we had with our families and friends.

The message that I always send to our children at Christmas is that one of the best and most memorable presents you can give is the gift of kindness. A simple act of kindness can make such a difference and you don't need to spend a fortune! This could be offering to help prepare Christmas dinner, doing the washing up, phoning a relative who is on their own or any selfless act that helps someone.

The best thing is that kindness is a gift that we can give to others any time of year, but it is even more special on Christmas Day.

I wish all of our pupils, staff, governor, parents and carers a very Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy New Year.

THOUGHTS THIS *Christmas*



A beautiful nativity set that came from the former Hirst High. Mary and Joseph gaze in wonder at Jesus their newborn son.

After Mary has given birth to Jesus in the stable, visitors begin to arrive including a group of shepherds. I am not sure how welcome they would have been arriving unexpectedly from the hillside and smelling distinctively of sheep! There is a line in Luke's gospel that comes just after the shepherds have gone off to tell everyone about the baby they have seen

"But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." Luke 2: 19

To ponder, to think about, contemplate, deliberate, muse, wonder about.....

Christmas and especially the run up to it is just such a busy time, a headlong rush of things to do that all seem so vital.

This is true in our schools and as well as at home. Putting up the tree and the lights, Nativity plays, Christmas lunch, singing carols in care homes, music and concerts, making things for Christmas fairs and class parties. The Christmas story can get overshadowed and pushed to the background, do we find time to even draw breath never mind ponder and contemplate? You might find a bit of time when you are walking the dog or in the bath to wonder and ponder, how over 2000 years after his birth that we are still remembering the events that happened in an obscure village far, far away from us here.

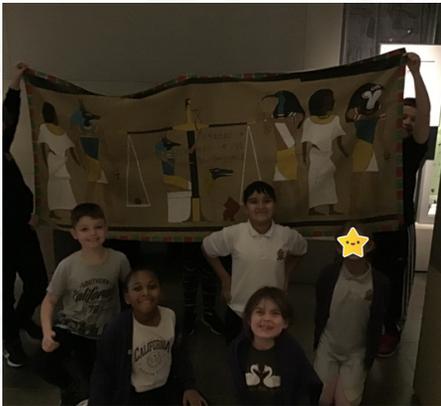
Wishing you peace and joy this Christmas time and a little time to ponder.

Sally Milner, Chaplain

A TRIP TO ANCIENT

Egypt

Year 4 at Bishop's Primary School visited the Hancock Museum to end their Enquiry unit about the Ancient Egyptians



They took part in a workshop during which they reenacted the mummification process, looked at x-ray images of mummified people and even saw a 3d print of an Egyptian's skull. They then explored the museum and found the mummified bodies they had just been learning about. They had a fantastic day and have thoroughly enjoyed their work on the Ancient Egyptians.



AWARDS GALORE

WELL DONE TO OUR CCF STUDENTS AT DUKE'S WHO
WERE AWARDED THEIR BASIC 1 STAR AWARD
YESTERDAY!

THANKS TO THE DUKE'S CCF STAFF TEAM FOR THEIR
TRAINING AND SUPPORT.





COOKING IN THE *Community*



Tuesday 21st November saw the start of our 'Cooking in the Community' event at Dukes. Parents were invited into school for a series of cookery lessons and each got to take home a meal they had prepared in school for a family of four. We were joined at our inaugural event by our Head Teacher Mr Atkinson who joined the parents cooking Spicy Pasta.

The session was very well led by Jan Shinkfield our teacher in charge of hospitality and an experienced chef. The sessions included many useful tips on how to prepare the food and how to easily vary the menu for different diets. Look out for our next sessions running next term or email susan.fletcher@dukes.ncea.org.uk to book a place.

STAGGERING GENEROSITY FOR

Wansbeck Valley Food Bank



Duke's had its annual food bank collection for Wansbeck Valley Food Bank. A staggering amount of goods were donated and the representative from the food bank was overwhelmed by everyone's generosity. This will go towards supporting many local families and individuals. The staff and students did so well collecting as many goods as they did, especially as we are still in a tough economic situation. ARC 1 and the Sixth Form fundraising committee did a sterling job organising everything.

The Duke's Fundraising committee ran a Christmas Fair on Saturday 2nd December. We had a special appearance from the main man himself and lots of crafts and goodies on sale. Everyone who came looked like they enjoyed it and we had some very generous support. We managed to raise money to move forward our community nights. Big thanks to everyone who helped out and gave up their Saturday.

We have had many successful community nights and look forward to organising more in 2024. They are a great way to come together and meet other families while enjoying some free food and activities. We look forward to welcoming new people next year. Watch out for the details of upcoming events.

Duke's staff wear it pink day. We had another fabulously pink day on the 20th of October. The staff and 6th form students came to school wearing pink, this was to raise awareness of breast cancer.

There was as staff "pink" tombola and an amazing £250.00 was raised



THE RETURN OF *Warkworth Choir*

Warkworth is delighted to have reformed a school choir! Thanks to the dedication of two volunteers from the local church, we now have an active and willing group of budding singers who have already performed on multiple occasions despite being brand new! Firstly, they performed at the Christmas Light Switch On in the village (alongside Florence, Eliza and Hallie who won a local competition to hit the button to switch them on!) back in November which was a proud moment for the school as we continue to build strong links with our local community.

The choir's singing received many compliments from villagers. More recently, thanks to the wonderful organisation of Mrs Glanville from the trust, the choir performed a medley of Christmas hits for families at the end of the day as well as care home residents at The Grange. We cannot wait for the new year ahead as the choir continues to go from strength to strength!



A CHRISTMAS *Story*



On Thursday 7th December, Thomas Bewick children came together and shared the Christmas story and sang some carols.



We were so lucky to have the Salvation Army band join us and play along to some of our favourite tunes!



It sounds like the school had a wonderful Christmas celebration. It must have been a special and memorable occasion for everyone involved.



LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN *love*



At Grace Darling this half term we have had a series of events raising much-needed money for national and local charities. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our community. In November, we were visited by a real-life Paralympian! Local hero, Stephen Miller, who is a 3-time gold winning Paralympian, visited our school and delivered an assembly for all children. Supported by Mr Norris and Mr Johnson, he then set up a circuit training session for each year group to take part in.



Over £2000 was raised in support of the Paralympian fund and school PE resources! Many of our children received Gold Awards for raising over £35 and were invited to have individual pictures taken with the local superstar. We are incredibly proud of how generous our school community has been this term and thank everyone for their much-needed support.

Grace Darling children also raised a fantastic £275 for Children in Need. The children were so excited when Mr Macfarlane brought a special guest into the classes to meet them. Can you guess who it was? Children enjoyed a range of Children In Need themed activities such as Teddy bear biscuit decorating, PSHE sessions around Positive Relationships, Mindfulness and PE with Joe Wicks. It is on these sorts of days that we remember the difference that we can make to others' lives and at Grace Darling we are always remembering to "Let all that we do be done in Love."



CHRISTMAS *performance*



All children at William Leech CofE Primary have taken part in Christmas performances. Children showed great levels of confidence as well as fantastic singing. A particular well done goes to four children who took on roles within the week of the performances to cover for illness. Over the week the children performed to packed halls so a big well done to our families for their support too.



COMMUNITY CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Once again there was a great turn out despite the weather at the annual Lynemouth carols by candlelight event. Members of the school and community joined together to spread festive cheer around the village and to turn on the Christmas lights. The lights were turned on by light design winner, Charley. The new nutcracker light looks fantastic.





BIKEABILITY

This year one of the William Leech school priorities is encouraging our children to be more active. Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 have taken part in Bikeability which teaches children how to ride their bike safely at different levels. 12 children were awarded level 1 and 9 children received their level 2 award.



CHRISTMAS AROUND THE

World

The children enjoyed learning about Christmas traditions around the world as they journeyed from one country to another throughout the day. Each group comprised of children from Reception to Year 6. We were so proud of all of the children who worked together and developed new friendships. The older children were amazing when supporting the younger children with their art and technology skills and everyone put their love in action so that an enjoyable day was had by all.



Christmas

CAROLS AND CRAFTS

at James Knott



Thank you to everyone who came to share carols and crafts with their child. We hope that you enjoyed hearing the children sing and getting involved in school, making calendars and Christmas decorations.

The children loved having you in their classrooms and we were very proud of every child who took part. This year we tried something different so that all children were centre stage and involved in sharing the Christmas story through song and readings.

Mrs Mullen is delighted to say that for the first time, every child at James Knott had the confidence to join in this Christmas time. We look forward to the Nursery family Christmas sing-a-long and to our Christingle service on Thursday.

James Knott

DANCE FOR COMIC RELIEF



We were proud to take part in an Asda dance-a-thon along with other local schools to raise money for Children in Need.

Diocese Advent CALENDAR

The Diocese of Newcastle created a digital Advent calendar it features people from across the diocese including Grace A who is in Year 11 (tile 9) at Duke's and our Chaplain, Sally Milner (tile 17)!

Take a look and have a listen!





Northumberland Church of England
Academy Trust

WE'RE HIRING



Scan the QR code to see our latest vacancies or go to
www.ncea.org.uk/about-us/vacancies

Can't see what you are looking for? Join our mailing list to receive
updates!





PLACES WHERE KIDS EAT FREE (OR FOR £1) CHRISTMAS HALF TERM 2023



moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free

MORRISONS

Spend £4.49 and get one free kids meal all day, every day.

BEEFEATER & BREWERS FAYRE

Two children under 16 can get a free breakfast every day with one paying adult!

ASDA

Kids eat for £1 All Day, Every Day at Asda cafes, with no adult spend required.

SIZZLING PUBS

Every Monday to Friday, 3 - 7pm, kids' mains are £1 with every adult meal.

THE REAL GREEK

Free Kids Meal for every £10 spent by an adult from Friday 22nd December 2023 until Sunday 7th January 2024.

TRAVELODGE & PREMIER INN

Buy 1 Adult Breakfast from just £8.99 & up to two kids eat breakfast for free

TGI FRIDAYS

Kids Eat Free When 'Stripes Rewards Members' buy any adult meal (Via App)

HUNGRY HORSE

Kids eat for £1 on Mondays

IKEA

Kids get a meal from 95p daily from 11am

SAINSBURYS CAFES

Kids eat for £1 with the purchase of an adult hot main. From 11:30am every day.

GORDON RAMSEY RESTAURANTS

Kids under 8 eat FREE all day, every day at selected Gordon Ramsay restaurants

BELLA ITALIA

Children eat for £1 with any adult main. The offer is valid 4-6pm Mon to Thurs.

WHITBREAD INNS

Two kids under 16 eat for FREE with every adult breakfast purchased

PRETO

Kids up to age 10 eat free all day on weekends and from 4pm weekdays with paying adults at Preto in Half Terms

PAUSA CAFE @ DUNELM

Kids get 1 mini main, 2 snacks & a drink FREE with every £4 spend after 3pm

TABLE TABLE

Two children under 16 can get a free breakfast every day with one paying adult!

FUTURE INNS

Under 5s eat for free with any adult meal.

NOT ANNOUNCED...

M&S, Tesco, YO! Sushi & Bills

Family Hubs

Here for everyone

ARCTIC ADVENTURES

0 - 8 YEARS

FREE

We will have a special guest coming along! Activities include; Obstacle courses, den making & much more!



Ashington Family Hub
Alexandra Road, Ashington
NE63 9EF, 01670 819988

4th January | 10:00 - 11:30



Bedlington Family Hub
Stead Lane, Bedlington
NE22 5JS, 01670 822714

3rd January | 10:00 - 11:30

Newbiggin Family Hub
Cleveland Avenue, Newbiggin
NE64 6RR 01670 819988

5th January | 10:00 - 11:30



Call To

BOOK NOW

Call To
BOOK NOW

ARCTIC ADVENTURES

AGES 9+, PARENTS DO NOT NEED TO STAY

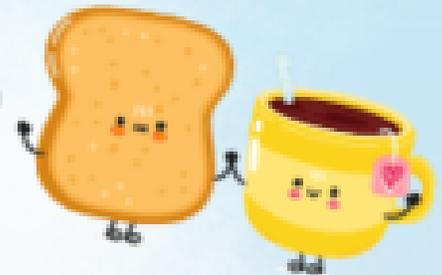
FREE

Bedlington Family Hub
Stead Lane, Bedlington
NE22 5JS, 01670 822714
3rd January | 13:00 - 14:30

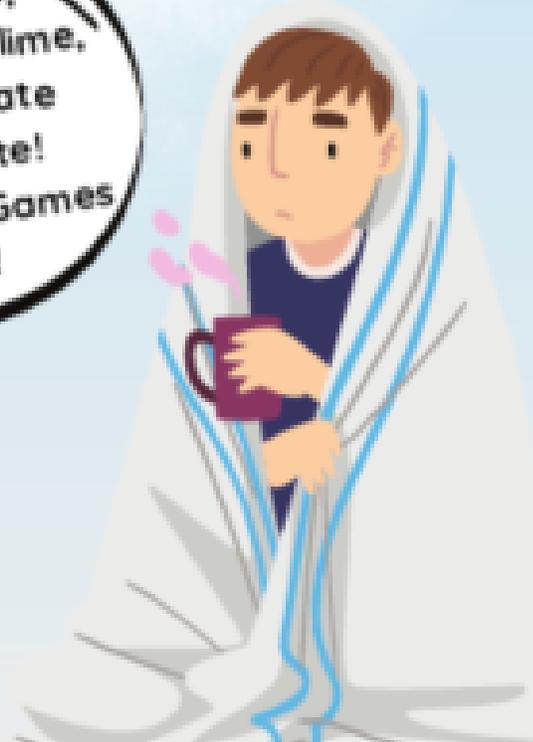
Ashington Family Hub
Alexandra Road, Ashington
NE63 9EF, 01670 819988
4th January | 13:00 - 14:30



Newbiggin Family Hub
Cleveland Avenue, Newbiggin
NE64 6RR 01670 819988
5th January | 13:00 - 14:30

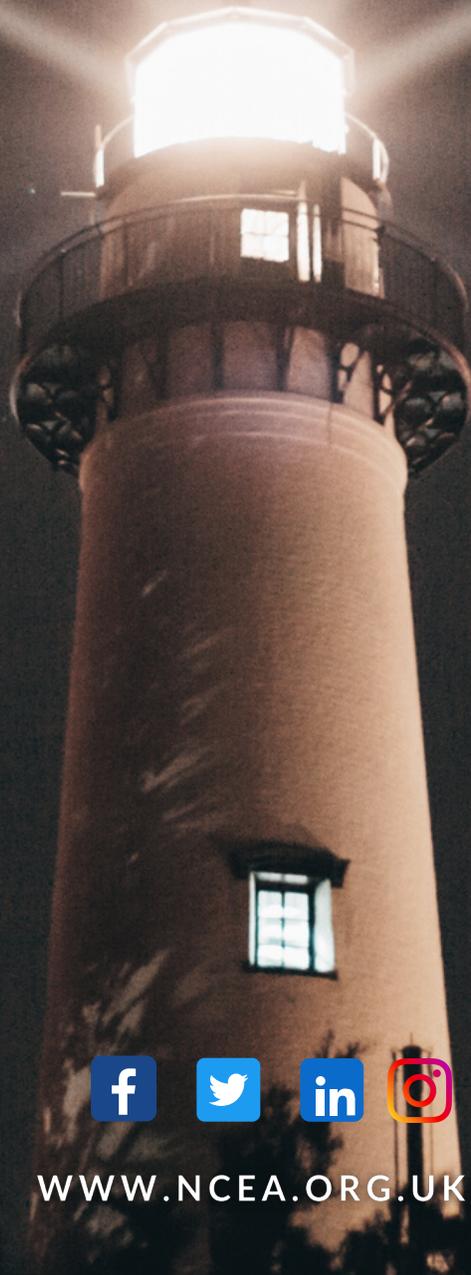


Activities include:
Making your own slime,
Making a chocolate
cake... in 1 minute!
Tea & Toast, Fun Games
& Activities!



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