



MORPETH  
*Stobhillgate*  
FIRST SCHOOL

# October Newsletter

Welcome to our October newsletter. It has been a very busy half term and as usual our children have blown us away with their hard work and fantastic enthusiasm.

I recently met with our newly elected Unicef ambassadors, who are our pupil representatives. I was extremely impressed by their enthusiasm and incredible ideas of how they can improve school for the children of Stobhillgate. As a [Unicef Rights Respecting School](#) we are always looking for ways to promote the Unicef rights of the child. The ambassadors have come up with a numbers of things they would like to achieve this year, everything from educating children about what bullying is; saving the planet and inviting visitors into school to tell us how to stay safe and healthy. Their action plan has already sprung to life! This week we were visited by our local PCSO's, who came to school to talk about firework safety. The children now all know about the important safety rules and I am

sure they will tell you all about them.

Can I thank everyone who made harvest festival donations. We have already sent our donations to the Wansbeck Foodbank and I know they will go to families in need, during this difficult time. Thank you to Kirstine, from the Mustard Tree foundation, who led our harvest festival assembly this morning, it was a great event and our children sang brilliantly.

We are very excited to host a Halloween day in school on Monday 31st October! Children are invited to come to school dressed in Halloween fancy dress and will take part in lots of fun spooky activities, including a disco in our exciting new building!

All of us at Stobhillgate First School would like to send huge congratulations to Mrs Gentry and her husband who are expecting their first child in April.

This year, we are trying something new! Our subject leaders are teaching their subject in different classes across school. It has been lovely for our staff to teach children throughout the school and get to know children beyond their class. We are very lucky to have some real subject specialist in school and our children are receiving some very exciting, fun and engaging lessons. I therefore thought this would be a good opportunity to find out more about our teachers and the subjects they lead.

## School Admissions

### Year 4 Parents

The [admissions portal](#) for Middle school places will close on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October.

### Nursery Parents

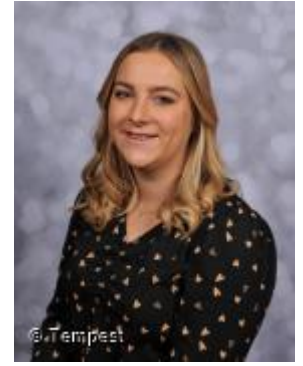
The [admissions portal](#) for Reception places will open on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November.

## Science – Miss Owens

My name is Miss Hannah Owens, I am the class teacher for Year 4 and I am responsible for Science, Design Technology and Modern Foreign Languages at Stobhillgate.

I have been a primary school teacher for 6 years, graduating from Leeds Trinity University in July 2016 with a BA First Class Honours Degree in Primary Education; with a specialism in the Later Years (ages 7-11).

I have taught across Key Stage 2, my career founding itself in upper Key Stage Two with a Year 6 form class at a three-tier Middle School in Ovingham. I taught English and Humanities across Years 5 and 6. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching across year groups; similarly to our newly adopted approach this academic year at Stobhillgate.



Joining Stobhillgate First School in September 2018 enabled me to develop as a middle leader and take up the position of Science Subject Lead; the subject I am most passionate about. I was fortunate to have some very inspirational teachers when I was younger, who made science learning engaging and memorable; something I wanted to adopt with my own teaching practice.

Science at Stobhillgate aims to excite our children's curiosity about the world around them and to help them to understand the importance of scientific discoveries to their lives, in the past and in the future. As our children progress through school, they will acquire scientific knowledge, understanding and concepts through discovery and be able to apply this to a range of contexts. Working scientifically is at the heart of our science curriculum- our children will develop skills to be confident scientists in order to aid their discoveries and develop teamwork, problem solving and resilience.

It has been a pleasure to get to know children across school a little better this half term and already, we have seen many a eureka moment happen through practical investigations, observations and research!

This half term, our science focus across school has been *Animals Including Humans*. Animals Including Humans is the only Science topic which is revisited in every year group throughout the primary age range. Children progress from naming body parts in Year 1 to knowing about bones and muscles in Year 3 to describing the digestive system in Year 4, which lays the foundations for their move to middle school where they will go on to learn about the circulatory system in Year 6.

Children in the Early Years were lucky to have been visited by a litter of puppies which generated discussion around animals and how to care for them. Children have also been observing seasonal change, looking closely at the changes that happen in Autumn; this has linked closely with Forest School where children have been focussing on different items related to Autumn each week.

Year 2 have been learning about animal groups, what animals eat and their life cycles – They thoroughly enjoyed looking at funny photos of Miss Owens at different stages of her life cycle – Baby, toddler, child, teenager and adult! ... Some of Year 2 weren't in agreement that she's not quite elderly yet!

Year 3 have learned about the different bones in the human body and why they are needed – For support, for movement and for protection. They went on to investigate muscles. To demonstrate how the muscles worked, together with the bones in our bodies, they made a working model of the hand! We have also become dieticians, learning what makes a balanced diet and closely observing nutritional information on food labels to understand healthy food options.

Year 4 have certainly been getting "hands on" with practical investigation this half term – some highlights were our model of the human digestive system, investigating skulls linked to animal diet and our tooth decay experiment, where we observed changes over time. Miss Owens was concerned about staff member's choices of drink and so confiscated drinks from the staffroom and called in the help of Year 4 to investigate who's drink choice was having the worst effect on their teeth! Children enjoyed writing letters of advice to the teachers on how best to care for their teeth!

Y4 have been observing changes over time this week in an experiment investigating tooth decay! Today we looked at our results! We found out that @MrElliott\_PE choice of red bull had the worst effect, followed by @BenHend74265164 Fresh Orange Juice! Letters are coming your way!



## Music, Geography, History – Mrs Roberts

### Music

Across each school I have taught in, Music leadership has always played a big part of my role. This is because music is my passion outside of school, which grew predominantly from playing in a steel band from a young age. This took me all over the country and internationally, performing and some prestigious venues and incredible size audiences over the years, through weekly gigs. The opportunities this gave me as a teenager and young adult, definitely set me up to be the teacher I am today.

I've always firmly believed music allows pupils to grow in confidence and self esteem as they work towards performing to audiences. Music lessons as our school involve instrument playing for the majority of the lesson, discussion is only used to aid performing and classrooms are alive with sound from start to finish.

At school throughout Autumn, Music has been awaiting the get go for after half term. This is because we deliver a half term of Art and a half term of Music interchangeably. This allows for progress to be made week on week, whilst giving each subject a good amount of weekly teaching time. However, Year 4 have been doing extra Music this half term as we have welcomed a ukulele teacher from Northumberland Music Service to provide Year 4 pupils (and Year 3 later in the year) with even higher than usual, quality musical instrument tuition. Along with this, pupils have brand new ukuleles to use, high quality resources to aid visual and auditory aspects of the lesson and the opportunity to create wonderful music as an ensemble. We are looking forward to opportunities throughout this year for all pupils to perform, sharing their successes in music with other pupils and parents.

Next half term will see classrooms being alive with sounds of djembe drums, recorders and glockenspiels.

### Geography

My passion for Geography comes from my great passion for the outdoors. Being a Girl Guide leader outside of work allowed me incredible mounting climbing, continent crossing and environmental development opportunities, through my role as an outdoors advisor both locally and nationally. This love for the world around us and a need to be immersed in nature at every opportunity, has most certainly allowed me channel enthusiasm into our Geography curriculum, since taking on the role of Geography lead here 3 years ago.

Leading Geography at our school has been an absolute pleasure. I have supported the delivery of this subject for our teachers, allowing it to grow and develop to ensure our pupils amazing experiences, where learning is tailored so specifically and carefully to allow for carefully planned next steps. This sets our pupils up for their changing world around them enables them to be curious and inspired about our planet and allows them to make links, ask questions and want to know more.





This half term in Year 1, the children have been working through a unit entitled 'Our Local Area'. This started with treasure hunts around our classroom and the school field. A pirate came and left us treasure to find, which we had to support with both map reading and map making. From this, Year 1 then explored maps of Stobhill. They explored what it means to be in Stobhill and how this compares to other places. We have explored housing, shops and transport links. We have made comparisons between living on an estate in a town with living in a village in the countryside. Finally, we travelled back in time and mapped out Stobhill from farmland to the present day, by exploring old maps and making a huge carpet map with a train track, shops, houses, church and of course our school.

In Year 2 pupils the children have been learning about The UK as a nation. They have continued to build on their map work skills from Year 1, mapping out the UK, learning careful details about each of the 4 nations and where each borders each. They have learned about the waters surrounding our islands follow this. They have planned routes and discussed what will be passed as they travel between locations in the UK by water and by land. I know there have been some fun ways of remembering key vocabulary when looking at names of places, exploring accents through drama work.

Year 3 and 4 have been studying their first History units of the year, and next half term will begin their first Geography units of the year.

Finally, in Geography, Stobhillgate hosted a Geography conference day for other school leaders to attend, where Mr Whitehead and I delivered a day of Geography subject leadership to share best practice between schools and to inspire other school leaders to develop their Geography curriculum to reach the subjects full potential for pupils. As part of this, the teachers who attended, joined Year 3 for a Geography lesson on volcanoes, where we made cross sections of the Earth and wrote a description for a new ride coming to a theme park (which will simulate a journey through Earth) to describe and explain what each layer of the Earth is like. The conference teachers were all very impressed by the Year 3 children who were exemplary throughout the lesson.

## **History**

As a child myself, history never made any sense. I couldn't make links between time periods and couldn't work out when each event happened in relation to modern times. When I started teaching, I had to relearn history and everything was so much clearer second time around. That's why I made it my aim in my teaching, to make History be a lesson to love. A lesson which made sense to pupils and a lesson which allowed pupils to make those all-important links to themselves and between time periods. Taking on History lead when I came to Stobhillgate 3 years ago, allowed me to make sure these elements were in place for our children and History is most certainly a lesson of awe and wonder here now, which inspires the children to want to ask questions and to know more about our past.

In Year 4 pupils have started their history work this term learning about The Ancient Greeks, following their final Geography unit of Year 3, where they studied Crete in Greece and compared this with Morpeth. Their Ancient Greek topic has allowed them to learn about daily life, beliefs and the very first Olympic Games. They have also explored invasions of Alexander the Great, debating whether or not 'great' should be used to describe him. Year 4 especially enjoyed learning about Athens and Sparta and why they were rivals. The girls found it particularly interesting learning about different rights they had depending on which city state they were from. This led to a debate around if they'd prefer to grow up in Athens or in Sparta.

In Year 3 we have been learning about the Ancient Egyptians. We have built repetitions of the Nile, and discovered why people moved closer to it. We have acted as archaeologists with tools in the sand, excavating artefacts and drawing ideas from these to give us clues into the past. The highlight of the half term was a 'real' mummification! The ceremony showed how the brain was removed with a hook up through the nose and discarded, the internal organs were removed and placed in canopic jars and how the body was then covered in salt, left for 40 days and then wrapped in linen bandages. Year 3 now know the reasons behind all of these rituals and can explain in detail the beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians. Finally, we have explored what daily life would be like for Egyptian children and concluded that most of us would not have preferred to live in this time in place of living in modern times.

In Year 1 and 2 this half term pupils have been studying Geography, but will switch after half term, ready to begin some exciting History lessons on The Great Fire of London (Year 1) and how homes have changed between Tudor, Victorian and Modern times (Year 2).

## English – Mrs MacAndrews

My name is Mrs Vicki MacAndrews, and I am the Year 2 class teacher and the English Lead. I have a BA and an MA degree in English Literature, where I specialised in the work of Charles Dickens. Previously, I worked at Seven Stories; a museum which aims to 'make literature accessible to all and to champion reading for pleasure amongst all age groups'. Following this, I worked in publishing before becoming a teacher. I taught at a primary school in London for many years, where I was on the English team and led LKS2 reading. I have always had a passion for reading and love to make the stories come to life.



It has been wonderful to see all of the children so engaged in both reading and writing this half term. The learning began in nursery with 'Shark in the Park' and 'You Choose'. The children have been taught about people who help them inside and outside of school, and they have loved dressing up as different characters from the book 'You Choose'.

In reception, the children have been reading 'Pumpkin Soup' and have demonstrated their storyteller voices with excellent recounts of the beginning, middle and end of the story. They enjoyed making and tasting vegetable soup, and explored different vegetables in the mud kitchen.

The children in Year 1 got a shock this term when they found evidence that Little Red Riding Hood had been through the classroom! They loved searching for clues and re-telling her tale, before writing their own journey story. Following this, they have been learning some of the key features of instruction writing. To help to inspire their own instructions, the children have spent time in the garden making slime and insect potions.

In Year 2, the children have been on journeys all around Australia and the UK. After reading the Australian classic 'Possum Magic', which follows two possums all around Australia in search of human food, the children tasted delicacies from around the world. There were definitely mixed reviews of the Vegemite sandwiches! Then, to help to inspire their own losing tale, they tried some specialities from around the UK. The food fun didn't end there however, as following the completion of their own story, the children started a unit on instruction writing. Unable to resist trying even more delicious treats, the children followed a recipe and baked their own cheese scones. Their finished recipes have been posted to Buckingham Palace, and we hope that the Royal Chef will use these and present a new Royal Scone to the King!

Year 3 have been on their own journey this half term when they began their writing with the text 'The Explorer'. The focus of the learning was on setting descriptions, and led to some amazing vocabulary and descriptive writing. The children completed this unit of learning by writing their own journey stories, where they included all of the different features that they had learnt about. Following this, they too began a unit on instruction writing. The focus of this being 'Beautiful Indoor Bulbs'. Again, this non-fiction unit provided the opportunity for more hands on learning. The children have loved rolling their sleeves up and getting their hands dirty, as they planted their own indoor bulbs.

Our Year 4 children began their learning with 'The Cobbler and the Dragon', which is a beating the monster story. The children spent time exploring how to effectively create plots and looked at different paragraph types, before applying this to their own wonderful writing. Linking to their previous text, the children then explored the instructions on how to trap a dragon. As the children began the innovation stage, they decided that they would like to write instructions for how to trap a teacher, and have tried to entice Miss Owens with many sweet treats! Watch out Miss Owens, it seems we have some very intelligent and somewhat sneaky Year 4s.

I would like to end by saying thank you for all of your continued support with the children's reading. We really do believe that children who are passionate and enthusiastic readers, become just as passionate and enthusiastic writers! I am very excited to see what adventures the children embark upon next half term in their English lessons.

## Maths – Mr Henderson

My name is Mr Henderson and alongside being Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion leader, I also lead maths at Stobhillgate First School. I am very proud of the attainment reached by our children in school.

Summative school data shows that our children performed very well in 21/22 academic year:

77% of our Year 2 Children achieved the expected standard in maths. Of which , 23% achieved Greater Depth. This was both above national average and moderated by the Local Authority.

On average across the whole school, 80%of children achieved the expected standard, of which, 33% were Greater Depth.

70% of our Year Four children scored between 20-25 in the Multiplication Tables Check.

Prior to joining Stobhillgate First School, I led maths in a large Primary school in the west end of Newcastle. I have a passion for teaching maths and helping children to reach their potential from the very earliest stages in Nursery right up to the pupils in our Year Four class.

Our maths curriculum in school is **carefully planned and sequenced** to ensure our children learning the key foundations in mathematics and these are then built upon in small manageable steps. This allows all of our children, no matter what their background, **to achieve the best they can.**

At Stobhillgate First School, lessons are structured in a specific way to ensure highly effective teaching so our children **'know more and remember more.'**

Consideration has been given to [Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction](#) while developing our lesson structure. Examples of this include, revisiting prior learning, targeted questioning, independent practice and scaffolding for difficult tasks.

Children need varied and frequent practice in order to be **fluent**. If children are not fluent, then when they are solving more complex problems the working memory is taken up by calculating basic facts, and children have less working memory to focus on solving the actual problem.

Fluency is further supported in Reception, Year One and Year Two by the '[Mastering Number Programme](#)' and with Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) in Year Three and Four.

The 'Mastery' approach to maths is taught using a **concrete-pictorial-abstract** pedagogy. Allowing children to feel and see concepts before moving into abstract form provides every child with access to the mathematical focus.

An example of this maybe they the children may use counters and other equipment to help with a subtraction calculation, but will eventually develop to being able to answer such a question without additional resources.

At home you can help your children in some of the following ways:

1. Include your child in every day maths like shopping, telling the time, counting out toys, baking etc.
2. [TTRS](#)
3. Follow the homework set by teachers on Seesaw.
4. [1 minute maths app](#)



## Physical Education and Computing – Mr Elliott

Hi, my name is Ryan Elliott, I am the Year 3 class teacher, Physical Education and Computing lead in school. I completed my degree in Sport and Exercise Science before moving on to complete my PGCE in primary teaching with a PE specialism. I have had a lifelong interest in sport and physical activity and been involved in various roles as a player, coach and official.



Here at Stobhillgate First School, our Physical Education curriculum is taught through a blend of a skills based and sports specific based approach. Our pupils begin their physical education journey in EYFS and KS1 following a fundamental movement skills based curriculum, predominantly working on their agility, balance and co-ordination, throwing and catching and running and jumping. Once these fundamental movement skills have been embedded and pupils have a solid platform to build upon, they then follow a sports based approach whereby they utilise their aforementioned skills to access specific sports which sets them up to compete: in-school, at school sporting competitions and outside of school in their own chosen sporting clubs.

Our Physical Education curriculum helps pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health (both physical and mental) and fitness. In addition, opportunities to compete in external sporting competitions and take part in our wide-ranging extra-curricular offers build character and helps to embed values such as fairness and respect whilst broadening their horizons. This, I believe, gives our pupils the skills needed to enable them to successfully transition from Stobhillgate First School into middle, high and eventually onto their working life.

Computing is important in everyday life. It is integral to all aspects of life and, with this in mind, at Stobhillgate First School, we endeavour to ensure that children develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards computing that will stay with them beyond their time at our school. At Stobhillgate First School, we believe that computing has the power to make a significant contribution to teaching and learning across all subjects and ages.

Computing equips pupils with the uniquely powerful set of skills to understand and develop in a rapidly changing world, where work and leisure activities are increasingly transformed by technology.



## The Friends of Stobhillgate

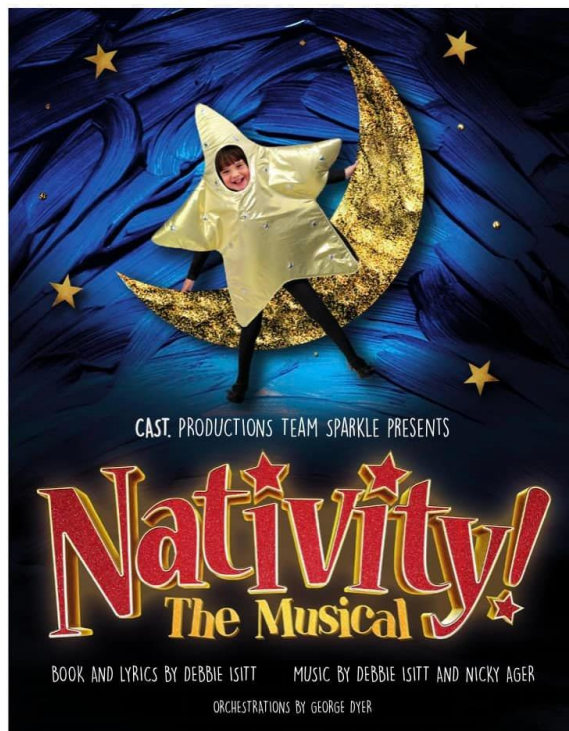
The Friends of Stobhillgate would like to say an enormous thank you for all the contributions of cakes, biscuits and donations for their Macmillan coffee morning. It was a huge success and we raised £110!

On Monday 31st October the Friends will be selling sweets and drinks at the Halloween disco. Please could we ask that the children bring in a £1 contribution.

This year the Friends are fundraising for lighting for our new performing arts centre. These will enhance the experiences our children receive. If you are interested in joining the Friends of Stobhillgate, then please come and speak to Mrs Bush and she will be happy to help.

## Dates for your Diary

<b>October</b>	
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> October	Teacher Training Day
Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> October	School recommences Halloween Day (Fancy Dress)
<b>November</b>	
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> November	Reception Admission Portal Opens
Thursday 3rd November	<a href="#">Dolce Special Lunch Menu</a>
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> November – Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> November	Parents' Evenings
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	Children in Need
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Y2 visit to Beamish



**CAST. THE PLAYHOUSE**

WHITLEY BAR: SATURDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER AT 6PM AND  
MONDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER AT 6.30PM 2022



This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International of Geneva. All intellectual property rights are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk