

Head of School Newsletter

Autumn Term 1 2015

Thank you - I wanted to say a huge thank you to you all for all your support this year with studies, performances and fund-raising. It is much appreciated and really does make a difference.

We started the school year full of enthusiasm, energy and hope and the children, staff and volunteers have been working extremely hard. I have had the pleasure to share the learning that takes place, with colleagues from other schools and they have been so complimentary. Your children are a credit to you and it is our pleasure to teach them and watch them grow and

The school has a wonderful calmness with the children being engaged, purposeful and challenged. The relationships between the staff and children are lovely and the behaviour is impeccable.

School Trips -

Foundation children enjoyed a wonderful visit to Sildon and even managed to meet a very special man...



The children got to sing songs, listen to stories and get messy!

Our oldest children in Year 6 visited Beamish Museum...



PTA - We've had a great fundraising start to this school year. A £300 donation from Hurworth Parish Council started the term off and was followed by a successful October disco, which children, staff and helpers all enjoyed. The Christmas Fair raised £905.50 which was match funded thanks to the generosity of some parents who have their own business. This is the most we have raised at a fair and we would like to thank you all for your wonderful support which made it possible.

All funds raised are going directly to the school library space in 'the street' which you should start to see take shape in the new year. Unfortunately we are still without a Chair or Secretary which will make the PTA difficult to continue. If anyone is interested in finding out more about the roles or helping out in any small way, please speak to one of the helpers or Heather Ferguson. On behalf of the PTA, we wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas!

Sporting achievements - Our fabulous Tag Rugby Team played in the Darlington finals at Mowden Park, Rugby Club Arena, coming joint first on points. The whole team performed superbly to bring home medals and are now going to represent Darlington at the Tees Valley Finals this month. Well done to everyone.

School Council

As part of British values, the children have once again taken part in our democratic process of school council elections. It began with the children sharing thoughts within their class - **What makes a good school council?** We followed with a whole school assembly, looking at the election process and past representatives views too! Thank you and well done to Kimi Bishop and Oli Clark for bravely stepping forward.



First we had to nominate within our classes, produce fabulous manifestos (thank you to all who helped support the children with this) before finally electing on Tuesday 21st October.

On the day, children very excitedly took their turn to vote. We had our very own secret electing booth and ballot box, kindly on loan from a local council. The votes were counted and verified and I'm proud to announce that our new school council representatives are:

Year 1 - Olivia Stephenson and Zac Reeve

Year 2 - Luke Slater and Kirsty Warwick

Year 3 - Sophia Cordery and Ben Matthias

Year 4 - Jack Edwards-Almond and Ciara Johnson

Year 5 - Emma Hughes and Noah Jenkinson

Year 6 - Ellie Blackburn and Ava Rose

Well done!

Now the work begins! Watch this space for further updates from our school councillors.

School Council Lead

Miss Williamson



Performances:

Foundation - The Nativity

The Foundation children did a wonderful job re-telling the story of the First Christmas through narration, singing and performing. Many of the children are only 4 years old and to stand up in front of parents, grandparents and strangers is a huge achievement, especially as they have only been in school for a term. Thank you to all parents who have supported the children with this. A special thank you must go to the Foundation team who worked their magic to create a very special story.



Key Stage 1 - Humph!

A huge well done to all our Key Stage 1 children who told the story of the first Christmas through a grumpy camel! It was full of laughter, excellent narrating, singing and performing. The children did an amazing performance which was made even trickier as Emily is still on maternity so we had to use a backing track (although you wouldn't have known). Thank you for all parents who have supported children with lines, costumes and practising songs. Thank you to the Key Stage 1 teachers for providing us with a lovely re-telling of Christmas.



Key Stage 2 - Hurworth's very own pantomime: Cinderella Rockerfella

What a performance! The children produced a magnificent show, jam packed with singing, acting, props and the traditional 'booing' and hissing'. Our very own ugly sisters (Freddie Walker and Ryan Allinson) gave the Civic's a run for their money and biased we may be but they were far superior! Thank you to all of you who helped support the children and school with props, costumes and support. The Key Stage teachers did a wonderful job and listening to comments, many parents left feeling extremely proud and happy.



Last but not least is a huge thank you to Mrs Coates; director, vocal coach, motivator and creative genius!



Carol Service

It was a very special time for us meeting at All Saints church with Reverend Andrew Stobart and you all. The children created a beautiful service. They read passages from the Bible, sang traditional carols and read personal prayers that they had written. Thank you for joining us and we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

Pantomime

We all had a fantastic time when we visited Darlington Civic Theatre to see Cinderella. The show was fantastic made better by sharing it together. The children, as always, represented our school by being respectful, courteous and well behaved and they joined in wholeheartedly with booing, hissing and applauding. Thank you very much for supporting us by not parking in the school car park and on Westfield Drive, this made it so much easier for the coaches which meant the transition was easier and faster. We felt the hand over was much better, as always we'll reflect and make any changes necessary.



New Staff - As well as Mrs Moon, we have now successfully appointed Mrs Tolley, Mrs Duru and Mr Csano to work, support and have fun with our children over the lunchtime period. They have already made a great impression and are thrilled to be part of our team.

With our reputation preceding us with the excellent support we give to students, we are providing places for the following: Mrs Hartley and Miss Orchard (who are currently studying a teacher training course at Darlington College) are working across the key stages. Our playtime leaders, Mrs Moon and Mrs Tolley have also enrolled onto the Cache course and will be having their placements in school. We have also welcomed new volunteers to school: Mrs Dye and Mrs Matthias.

Safeguarding your children - We take the safety and welfare of your children extremely seriously and thought we'd keep you up to date of current training and issues. As well as all staff being trained and holding safeguarding and first aid training certificates (half of which have paediatric training) we will be refreshing our skills every half term in safeguarding, first aid procedures and CPR (using the 15 resuscitation dummies in school). This is to ensure all staff are confident and know exactly what to do not only with minor ailments but more importantly if there was an emergency. Additionally, we have purchased a defibrillator (hopefully never to be used) in order to be fully prepared if the worst case scenario ever happened.

Car parking - I am delighted that the car park barrier has alleviated the risk to children when some parents have parked in the school car park, however I am aware that children are still 'at risk' from drivers who are not taking 'due care and attention' when using their cars to bring children to school. Sadly, I do not have a solution to this problem (apart from asking you not to drive your children to school and this for some is just not possible and I am fully aware of that), all that I can do is urge you to take extreme care, try and park as far away from school as is reasonably possible, be patient and tolerant. Traffic congestion before and after school is not just limited to our school but is a national problem. If you can find alternatives such as car shares, walking to school (when possible) and allowing plenty of time then the morning and after school runs may not be quite as fraught. Please try your best, our children need your help.

Anti-Social Behaviour - It is with much sadness and huge disappointment that I am informing you that unfortunately some of our ex pupils have been using our school car park as a recreational area and not only leaving rubbish around but climbing over the fences and damaging property, being abusive to staff and worse leaving harmful waste with the sole intention of causing harm.

As a result we have had to take action and have painted the fences with anti-climb paint, involved our local anti-social behaviour office (Glenn Caley), the police and fitted extra video surveillance. Please can we ask parents of children with older siblings to stress the fact that school and its grounds (car park, grass areas and MUGA - Multi Use Games Area) are private property and they should not be using it as a social point. If damage or anti-social offences are committed then this will be reported and even if your child has not been the perpetrator then they may receive a caution by the police (guilty by association) and this will stay on their record. This may seem extreme but when we have had teenagers being abusive, or intimidating (by the very size of the group), fund raised property broken and more recently, the most disturbing, items left to cause significant harm then we have been left with no alternative but to act quickly and effectively to prevent any child being at risk from injury. We hope you agree and support us fully.

Finally - I started with a thank you and I'll finish with a thank you. Hurworth Primary School is a very special place to be. It's filled with happy, motivated and hard working pupils who are supported by a team of dedicated, passionate and resilient teachers and parents who support with help, encouragement, time and resources, thank you!

We hope you have a wonderful Christmas with laughter, relaxation and cheer!

Happy Christmas...

