

This has been a very short half-term but we have packed a lot in. The weather has been kind and children have enjoyed OPAL as well as their learning in class.

Ofsted/Parent Questionnaire

Thank you to all parents who contributed to both the Parent Questionnaire earlier in year and to Ofsted Parent View during the inspection. The children impressed them with their learning and their respectful attitudes. The winner of the Amazon voucher prize draw for the original questionnaire was Kristy Smith, mum of Darcey in Y6! We are preparing responses to your comments, which we will use to further improve the school.

Thank you - The School Council decided to support the RSPCA for the recent non-uniform day.

This raised £211 which has been sent to the charity.



Walking to School

We have been doing Walking to School for nearly a year now. The children love collecting the badges.

Some parents have asked if walking/parking and striding **home** counts as well – it does!

In addition, the Walking to School team at County Durham have awarded the school a £250 prize for our efforts to reduce parking outside of school and encourage healthy travel.

OPAL

As part of OPAL play this half term we are developing our sports offer. Although many children love to play football, we feel it is important that they have the opportunity to explore a variety of other sports. Therefore, we have purchased new equipment and throughout the next half term children will be able to access tennis, basketball and cricket during lunchtimes.



In addition to this, we are adding a fire pit to our provision where children will be able to toast marshmallows. Each class will have a chance to visit the fire pit once during the next half term under close supervision by trained staff.

We are continually trying to increase our large loose parts collection so that children can build dens. If you have any **wood, pipes and milk or bread crates** you wish to donate, please take them to the school entrance. Thank you in advance, we really appreciate your donations.

SchoolComms/Arbor

As we have changed information systems to Arbor, there have been some disruptions to visibility of payments. We apologise for this. **Mrs O'Malley will send a separate message tomorrow, but please do not make any further payments on School Comms.** The Office staff will work hard over the weeks ahead to rectify payments and move payments, school lunches and messaging to Arbor. Please rest assured that any money sent through SchoolComms is on our system, but unfortunately you can't see it.

As we approach May half term, I wanted to remind you about some activities next week as well as all that will be happening in our Sports Week straight after half term. As usual, our Dates for the Diary are at the end of the newsletter.

Next week:

Y1/2 Rocket-Making

Parents in Y1 and Y2 are invited to school to help the children with their rocket-making Design Technology project on Monday 18th May. The main gate will open at 1.55 and it will take approximately 1 hour.



Art Exhibition

On Tuesday 19th May we have our annual Art Exhibition. This is a chance for us to share and celebrate some of the children's artwork from this academic year. We would love you to come and see all the work on display.

The exhibition will be in the Lower School Hall.

There'll be the opportunity to see the children's artwork before and after the end of the school day. If you want to see it at the start of the day, you can have a look as you drop your child off. In the afternoon, we'll open the gates at 2:45 to enable parents to come in sooner to enjoy the exhibition. We'll also make it accessible at the end of the school day too, until 3:40.

We hope you will have time to see all the art on display.



Inset Days

On Thursday 21st and Friday 22nd May, the school will be closed to children. Staff will be working on the PSHE curriculum, following on from the draft RSHE Policy which we sent recently.



Assessments

Y6 completed their SATs on Thursday and enjoyed a celebration on Friday. The rest of the school either completed their assessments last week or will do so next week.

There are still two more assessments to take place this term.

Phonics Test – All of Y1 will take the Phonics Test in the week beginning 8th June. This will be done on a one-to-one basis and should be completed for all children by the end of the week.

Multiplication Test – All of Y4 will take the Multiplication Test during the first weeks after half term. This is an online, timed test which tests the children's knowledge of their times tables up to 12 times 12. If your child wants to practise for this, the Sound Check on Time Table Rock Stars is a similar format. Year 4 teachers have also provided times-tables packs to help children prepare.

Sports Week

Our first week back after half term is Sports Week. We hope the weather will be kind to us all week! Children should come in their PE clothing Monday to Thursday (Y1 to Y4) and then non-school uniform on the Friday. Y5 and Y6 should be in PE clothing all week. Swimming will also take place on Tuesday for Y6 (more information will follow about swimming).

We have a range of activities for the children and the plan is as follows:

Monday 1st June – **Skipping Activities led by Skipping School Ltd**

Tuesday 2nd June – **Active morning** – a variety of activities for children from Y1 to Y6

After School – **Sponsored Bike Ride** for children from Y2 to Y6 and their families.

We cycle from school along the cycle path to the 'Transformers' near Leadgate and then back. The children do it as a sponsored event. Details have already been emailed to the children from Y2 to Y6.

Wednesday 3rd June - Sports Day

The events will run in the following order:

9:05 – Years 5 and 6

10:30 – Years 1 and 2

1:00 – All Pre-School and Reception. **Ladybirds to start 15 minutes later today.**

Bumblebees will stay for lunch today. Bumblebee parents to take children home after sports day.

2:10 – Years 3 and 4

Asda Stanley have kindly agreed to give the children refreshments during Sports Day.

Parents are very welcome to come and see their children's races take place. Hopefully, if things go to plan, one event will finish in time for parents to leave and then new parents arrive.

To ensure the safety of the children in school we will open the main gates for entrance 10 minutes before the start of each event e.g. For Y1 and Y2 the main gates will be opened at 10:20.

The children in Pre-School will do one race, Reception will do two races and Y1 and Y2 will take part in three races each.

For Key Stage 2 we aim for the children to take part in at least two races. Some children may take part in more than this due to the number of children in their team, others may only choose to take part in one, but we aim to involve them all. **Year 6s should bring a change of top for one of the races as they might get wet!**

Every year, some children choose not to participate and school can find alternative jobs at sports day for them. Please don't keep a reluctant child off on Sports Day – please speak to the school and we can support you in this!

Thursday 4th June – Outdoor Activities in the school grounds – Y1 and Y2 a.m./Y3 and Y4 p.m.
Sleepover for Y6 – an evening in school and then a night on the hall floor.
Details have been emailed directly to parents of Y6 children.

Friday 5th June – Outdoor Activities in the school grounds – Y5 and Y6 - including the climbing wall
Payment/consent for this will come out soon.

Sunday 7th June - (New this year) **Junior Parkrun at Chester-Le-Street Riverside Park, 9am**
Families should sign up on the [Parkrun website](http://parkrun.org.uk) (parkrun.org.uk). Some of our staff will attend to cheer you on! We plan to become a Parkrun Primary and Mr McIntosh aims to set up a school group for this.

We're sure the children will enjoy everything that is in store for them over the next few weeks and leading up to the end of this academic year. The next two pages have reminders about the dates for the rest of this term. We have also included a PDF of some of the activities that the Heel and Toe charity (who provide our recycled clothing bank) have coming up in the rest of the year.

Mark Temple
Head Teacher



SUMMER TERM 2026	
Thursday 15th May	PM: 1HB to Year 1 Disney Festival
Monday 18th May	Year 1 and 2 parents/carers are invited to a rocket building afternoon
Tuesday 19 th May	Art Exhibition - celebrating the children's artwork
Tuesday 19 th May	Little Fingers Music programme for Pre-School until the end of term. Also Mrs Geach's class to do Little Fingers from 19 th May to 16 th June.
Wednesday 20th May	PM: Year 2 Striking and Fielding Festival
Thursday 21st May	Staff INSET Day– School is closed to children.
Friday 22nd May	Staff INSET Day – School is closed to children.
May Half Term	Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May
Monday 1 st June	Back to school
1st June to 13th June	Y4 Multiplication Tables Check – Test period
Monday 1st June	SPORTS WEEK Skipping Activity Session today
Tuesday 2nd June	Active Morning for all children from Y1 to Y6
Tuesday 2nd June	Y5/6 Athletics Competition
Tuesday 2 nd June	Y6 Swimming block restarts
Tuesday 2nd June after school	Sponsored Bike Ride after school for children from Y2 to Y6
Wednesday 3rd June	SPORTS DAYS for all year groups: 9:05 – Years 5 and 6 10:30 – Years 1 and 2 1:00 – Pre-School and Reception. Bumblebees stay for lunch. Ladybirds to start 15 minutes later today. 2:10 – Years 3 and 4 This year we hope to hold adult races too!
Thursday 4 th June	Y1/2 (a.m.) and Y3/4 (p.m.) – Outdoor Activities in the grounds
Thursday 4th June	Y5/6 Countdown Cricket Competition
Thursday 4 th June evening	Sleepover for Y6 – arriving at school between 6:30 and 6:45
Friday 5 th June	Activity Day for Y5 and Y6 (Including Climbing Wall) Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Friday 5th June	Y5/6 Girls' Cricket Competition
Sunday 7th June	9am Junior Parkrun at Chester-le-Street Park
8 th to 12th June	Phonics Screening Check – Test Week – All of Y1 children plus those Y2 children who did not reach the required standard last year.
Tuesday 9th June	PM: 4Mac Cricket Festival
Friday 12th June	Y5/6 Stingers Netball Competition
Wednesday 17 th June	Transition Day for Reception (current Pre-School to move into Reception)
Wednesday 17 th June	Alternative Sports Day (if 1 st date rained off)
Wednesday 17 th June	Y6 Boys – Puberty Talk
Wednesday 17th June	After school: Durham Dash competition
Tuesday 23 rd June	Mrs Sparkes' class to do Little Fingers Music programme until the end of the term.
Friday 26th June	Letters to go out today to all parents re classes for next year
Monday 29th June	Year 1 and 2 trip to Kirkley Hall Zoo
Monday 29th June	Reception Superhero Festival
Tuesday 30th June – Thursday 2nd July	Transition Days for Tanfield School / NDA (now confirmed)
Tuesday 30 th June	Transition lesson for all children at Tanfield Primary (10:20 to 11:20)
Tuesday 30 th June	Meet the Teacher meeting – 4:00 p.m. + Creche, followed by Meet the Head Teacher Meeting about PSHE

Wednesday 1st July	Transition afternoon for children and parents of Pre-School and Reception to learn more about how things work in the new year groups and support their children with this progression. (If attending this you do not need to attend the 'Meet the Teacher' on Monday night.)
Friday 3rd July	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Friday 3 rd July	Reports go out to all parents
Monday 6 th July	Parent Meetings for those parents who would like an appointment
Thursday 9th July	PM: Year 3/4 Parental Engagement – Greenhouse building
Monday 13th July	Y6 Quidditch Festival for children who have not represented the school in sport.
Monday 13 th July	Y6 Leavers' Meal – 4:15 until 5:45
Monday 13 th July	Thankyou tea for all who have helped us this year – 2:30 until 3:30 Y5 to prepare and serve.
Tuesday 14 th July	Bastille Day – all to come in dressed in red, white and blue
Tuesday 14 th July	Y6 Dress Rehearsal to the Upper School and some parents – afternoon Y6 Performance – evening – 6 p.m
Wednesday 15th July	Y2 Moving on Assembly for their parents (9 a.m.)
Wednesday 15 th July	Y6 Performance – evening – 6p.m.
Thursday 16th July	Lower School Fun Day / Craster Upper School Walk
Friday 17 th July	Y6 Leavers' Assembly for Y6 and their parents (9 a.m.) Last day of term
Tuesday 1 st Sept 2026	Back to School