



# MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to May's newsletter – the last one this half term before we break up for the week's holidays. We have had varied weather this month, with glorious sunny days (great for Outdoor Learning opportunities!) mixed with gloomy rainy days, especially yesterday! Let's hope the sun shines and we have dry weather for our half-term holiday next week so that families can take full advantage of enjoying being outdoors! I hope you enjoy reading all about the learning which has taken place across the classes this month and the exciting enrichment events which have taken place too. Please pay particular attention to polite reminders and information about school matters in addition to important notices about future events for next half term.

## Classroom Learning

- **Reception** – Reception have enjoyed learning about minibeasts. They have identified minibeasts in the outdoor area and garden. They have also enjoyed planting seeds and watching the seeds grow into plants. They have also planted flowers in the outside area. They know the conditions needed for plants to grow.
- **Year 1** – The children have enjoyed using our outdoor areas to investigate plants and trees.
- **Year 2** – For their English unit, the children picked up litter from the school yard and explained the different types of rubbish they found. They were able to identify which items could be recycled. The children received an exciting letter from Ryan's World asking them how to grow plants! They wrote a letter back to him explaining that plants need air, water, sunlight, time, the right temperature and soil to grow. Some of the year 2 children have taken part in a Theraplay Intervention with an Educational Psychologist, Katie Phillips.
- **Year 3** – Pupils have enjoyed working with Mrs Parker, Music specialist, this half term and have been learning how to move cups to a rhythm.
- **Year 4** – Pupils enjoyed a lovely Geography and Science trip to Northumberland Park where they looked at the wildlife in different areas and created food chains. They also surveyed how it was used and thought about how it could be improved. The children have enjoyed their first swimming lessons and are progressing well.
- **Year 6** – Pupils in Year 6 took part in the national End of Key Stage 2 Statutory Tests – SATS – on 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> May. They worked so hard beforehand, revising and practising right up to the day of each test and tried their very best. All pupils enjoyed a full English cooked breakfast on the morning of each test to give them brain energy! Many thanks to Christine, our school cook, for coming into work an hour early every morning to cook their bacon and eggs! The children celebrated finishing their SATs by watching the film, 'Wonder' linked to their English work and also visiting Davanti's restaurant in Tynemouth on Friday to enjoy a three course meal, fully paid for by school.

## Curriculum Enrichment Learning

- Children from Year 1 and Year 2 visited NUCASTLE NUFC Foundation centre in Newcastle yesterday to take part in a KS1 Multi-skills competition with 3 other North East primary schools. The children had a wonderful time and enjoyed the experience. Many thanks to parent helpers who volunteered to help on the trip.
- Year 3 have spent the full day, today, at The Great North (Hancock) Museum in Newcastle to explore the Ancient Egyptian galleries to support their history current unit of study on The Ancient Egyptians.

- Year 6 visited the Hancock Museum on Monday of this week to learn more about Evolution to support their current Science unit of work and took part in a half-day workshop on conductive music on Tuesday.
- Children from Year 4 and Year 5 have continued taking part in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) weekly learning programme, 'Tackling Insights' delivered by the Newcastle Falcons. As part of this programme, they have also participated in weekly rugby coaching sessions with a Newcastle Falcons coach.
- Children in KS2 enjoyed working with Mr E and Mr B as part of the Conductive Music STEAM workshop. The children developed skills in music technology; working together to improvise and compose their own tunes using micro bits.

### Staffing Update

We would like to inform you that Mrs Roll, Nursery teacher, is currently absent from work due to having undergone a planned surgical procedure. She will be absent from work for a number of weeks as she recovers from her surgery. In the meantime, the children in the Nursery are being taught by Miss Tetley, who is an EYFS teacher, and who is well-known to school and pupils, having previously taught classes to cover for absent teachers and who has also carried out Teaching Assistant work across the school.

### School visit to Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre

We are very excited that we have been given the opportunity to take part in a fully funded day trip to the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June. We are extremely grateful to the North Shields Fishermen's Heritage Project for offering this unique, never-before, opportunity to the pupils of Riverside! **The trip will be for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 only.** Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre aims to take pupils back to the height of the local fishing industry in the 1950's. Pupils will have first-hand experience of what it was like to be a trawlerman out at sea (for three weeks) by exploring the Ross Tiger trawler (in dry dock in the museum). Pupils will be able to compare Grimsby with their previous learning about North Shields Fish Quay. Further details will be sent out after half term but parents, *please note, pupils will be required to arrive at school early that day for an early departure and we will arrive at school in the early evening.* Exact timings will be provided to Year 5 and Year 6 parents in the letter.

### Fidget Toys

We have seen an increasing number of pupils bringing 'Fidget Toys' into school without prior agreement with school. The purpose of Fidget Toys is to help pupils do two things: to self-regulate (during moments of anxiety or stress) and to improve concentration in order to learn. These toys can help pupils by providing visual or tactile input. **However, they can also have the opposite effect and can be distracting, preventing themselves and other children from learning.** At this school, we have a wide range of Fidget Toys, specifically purchased for pupils who may require them, from time to time, and all staff have been fully trained in selecting the most appropriate toy to match the needs of the individual pupil and at an appropriate time.

**Please do not send your child into school with a fidget toy from home.** If you feel your child has additional needs and you feel a fidget toy would help them, please ask to make an appointment with Mrs Hall, our experienced SENDCo, who will discuss this with you.

### OPAL at Riverside (Outdoor Play and Learning)

Riverside Primary School has been an OPAL school for a number of years but this half term we have reviewed and re-evaluated our playtimes provision and we now have an enhanced play offer for all our children. We have appointed OPAL Buddies to organise and set up equipment and ensure it is safely stored away at the end of the day. We feel that our new resources provide greater playtime experiences for all our children, making for happier playtimes all round!

### Punctuality

Arriving on time for the start of the school day is very important to your child's academic achievement, their wellbeing, and also to their wider development, preparing them for successful transitions as they grow older. Regular school attendance supports children's educational, economic and social outcomes and when at school, pupils can be supported to have positive relationships with peers and this contributes to better mental health. *However, this week, the proportion of pupils who have arrived late is 3.2%. We believe it should be 0%.* We, therefore, require the support of parents in ensuring your child arrives on time for the start of the school day (8.50am).

### News from the Community

We don't normally share news about what our pupils achieve outside of school but I am delighted to let you know that three of our Year 5 pupils who play football for North Shields Under 10's have won the Northumberland League Cup for Under 10's and they have also been named as winners of the whole league table – Well done to Jackson, Kai and Charlie!

### Finally...

School closes at 2.30pm this afternoon for the start of the May half term holidays. School staff are taking part in a whole school staff training session this afternoon. School is closed on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May as this is also a designated whole school Staff Training Day.

On behalf of everyone here at Riverside, we wish our pupils and families a very happy holiday and look forward to a return to school on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 8.50am for the final half term of learning for the 2023-2024 academic year!

Yours sincerely,

*A. Yilmaz*

Mrs Yilmaz,  
Headteacher