



# DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to December's Newsletter. This is always a very special and magical time of year in school, if not very, very busy too! There has been lots going on with visits, visitors, a trip to the Pantomime and a visit from Santa, not to mention the class Christmas parties and our wonderful Christmas Show yesterday. As the school closes for the Christmas holidays, a word of thanks must go to all the wonderful staff at Riverside who have worked hard to make sure our children have had the most memorable festive experiences, and I am sure they will be looking forward to having a rest and spending time with their own children and families.

## Classroom News

**Nursery** - Nursery have had great fun being introduced to Posada which is the religious festival from Spain that celebrates the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Irene and Liz came from St Columba's United Reformed Church in North Shields and introduced us to Posada bringing in tiny figures of Joseph, Mary and the donkey. These figures travelled around the classrooms of Riverside all week. When it was Nursery's turn, we looked after them very carefully for the day before sending them on their journey up to Year 2.

**Reception** - Reception children have really enjoyed getting into the Christmas spirit! They have had a Santa's workshop in the classroom and have wrapped a variety of presents really well! They have also written letters to Santa and have posted them in our Christmas post box! The children have loved dressing up in elf and Mrs Claus costumes and have had lots of fun with the Naughty Elf who has been getting up to all sorts of tricks! The children have been learning about the Nativity story and comparing the biblical events to modern day.

**Year 1** - Year 1 have finished reading the book, 'Katie in London' in their English lessons and they have been writing about their favourite London landmarks like Buckingham Palace in a non-chronological report. Their knowledge of London is great and they have loved this unit of work! In Maths, they have been naming and recognising 3D shapes. They have completed their moving Christmas cards in Design Technology. Some children wanted to use a 'push and pull' mechanism whilst others used a hinge design for an opening and closing door. They have worked incredibly hard and all the cards look amazing! They can't wait to show them to their grown-ups. The children have been demonstrating different moves in PE and are now confident when doing different rolls.

**Year 2** - Year 2 have worked extremely hard to practise their sewing skills and have all made a brilliant Christmas bauble made from felt. They are all very excited to take them home at the end of the week to hang them on their trees at home! In Geography, they have explored our outdoor area at the back of the yard to investigate natural habitats. They have thought carefully about how we can help to look after and protect natural environments in our local area!

**Year 3** - Year 3 have enjoyed their Christmas celebrations including Christmas parties, Christmas lunch and performing in the Christmas Show. They were kindly donated a bag of goodies by St John's Church, Percy Main. The children enjoyed making Christingles and holding a Christingle Service in the classroom. In Computing, the children have enjoyed using Gmail and working on collaborative documents including Docs, Slides and Meet. In PE, they have been taking part in invasion games and dance and have developed their basic skills. In French, they have been learning about the days of the week and months of the year as well as learning some Christmas words in French. The children have also enjoyed using our new Sensory Pathway which is helping us to focus on our work!

**Year 4** - In English, Year 4 children have been using the book to write a diary entry from "Leon and the Place In between". In the Geography topic, they have been learning about Antarctica and Shackleton's exploration. In RE, children have been learning about the importance of the Bible and how people find out about God and Jesus.

Children are very excited about the Design and Technology topic, Lighthouses. They have been producing their own lighthouses that actually light up. In Maths, children have been working hard on times tables and multiplication methods.

**Year 5** – Year 5 went to Norham High School for festive cooking session on Monday where they made their own gingerbread men from scratch. They went on a geography field trip walk in the local area, going through Linea Park and the Royal Quays Marina, to observe local signs of recreational land use and ask some questions to people using the area. Year 5 and Year 6 girls enjoyed a 'Clubbercise' fun dance session at Norham High School along with three other local schools where they took part in vigorous dancing with glowsticks. In class, the children have enjoyed the gruesome story of Beowulf and Grendel and finished writing their own tale with an invented monster. They have completed the electric vehicle chassis in DT and now need to complete individual modifications.

**Year 6** – Year 6 children have been working very hard in English, to write action scenes and diary entries based on King Kong. In Maths, children are learning all about fractions, dividing them, multiplying them and finding fractions of amounts. In Geography, children have been focusing on why oceans are so important and have conducted fieldwork on how much litter is in our local coastal area. They have been comparing different Bible stories on Jesus' birth in RE and have been creating Christmas decorations as part of the Science Electricity unit of work.

### Staffing News

Mrs Burston, Teaching Assistant in Year 2, continues to be absent from work following planned surgery. We wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing her soon. Miss Calboutin continues to be the long term cover Teaching Assistant in Year 2, supporting children's learning.

Christine, our school cook, remains absent from work, recovering from planned surgery in the summer and Joanna continues to be our temporary School Cook.

Miss Bates, Year 4 teacher, is currently absent from work following recent surgery. Mrs Taylor is currently the teacher of Year 4. We wish Miss Bates well in her recovery and hope to see her back at Riverside soon.

### Christmas Dinner Day

Joanna and the team put on a tasty traditional Christmas Lunch for us all on Wednesday. We ate roast turkey and gravy with all the trimmings, including brussel sprouts, followed by a delicious dessert. All the staff ate their lunch in the hall amongst the children and, with festive jumpers and Christmas songs playing, it was a truly magical experience. The food was absolutely delicious!

### KS2 Trip to The Little Mermaid Pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle

KS2 children enjoyed their annual visit to Newcastle Theatre Royal to watch a performance of 'The Little Mermaid' pantomime. There were the usual funny jokes and gags and slapstick comedy where members of the audience did get wet when water was sprayed on them – all in good fun, of course! Then there were the amazing special effects where a carriage, driven by Danny Adams, came out from the stage over the heads of the audience and he was also seen inside the large mouth of a moving shark! We were especially excited when two of our Year 6 pupils, Ethan and Violet, were invited to meet Danny Adams backstage in the Green Room and then they appeared on stage with him at the end of the show where they were asked to repeat a tongue twister with some hilarious mistakes!

### Class Christmas Parties

We held our Christmas parties last week. The children took part in party games in the hall, followed by their Festive Tea Party. The party outfits were amazing and there was an abundance of sparkly sequins this year. All class parties were fully financed by our School Fund (your voluntary donations). We would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for their regular contributions to our School Fund throughout the year as it enables us to provide all our children with these wonderful experiences, not only at Christmas, but across the year.

### Riverside's Christmas Show

We hope you were all thoroughly entertained at the two performances of our Christmas Show yesterday. The children sang beautifully and with such enthusiasm. Our narrators spoke clearly and with confidence and their timing was perfect. A particular 'well done' must go to the younger children who had non-speaking acting parts and knew exactly what to do and when! Thank you very much for your donations made when obtaining tickets for the shows and for putting monies into the collection bucket on the day. Your generosity amounted to £141.84 which will be paid into our School Fund account.

### A Very Special Visitor

This morning, we welcomed a very special visitor to Riverside – Santa Claus, himself!! Santa visited every classroom and presented every child with a selection box. We were extremely lucky he was able to fit us into his busy schedule this year but he told me he will always make time to visit the children of Riverside at Christmas as they are ALL amazing!

### The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Thank you all for your kind donations to our recent Poppy Appeal which took place in early November. Our monies were collected and we have just received their note of thanks. We raised the grand total of £120.40

The message from the Royal British Legion is: 'Your support has made a real difference to those in the Armed Forces community. Without your efforts, we couldn't do the work we do.'

### ReachMoreParents

We are delighted that so many of our parents have now signed up to our new school app! It really is the best way for us to communicate with you and share lots of photographs of what your children have been up to as well as those timely reminders of dates and times of upcoming events. We will also be using the app to obtain parental consent for trips. If you know of a parent who hasn't yet signed up, please encourage them to do so. School Office staff can also assist with setting up the app and activating notifications on your phone.

### Sensory Pathway

You will have seen the photographs on the ReachMoreParents app on Wednesday of last week that we have had a 'Sensory Pathway' installed in school. For lots of children with Neurodevelopmental Conditions, they need regular support to manage all of the sensory input from the environment around them. The Sensory Pathway helps sensory processing to allow children to regulate and organise their senses in order. This is done through a sequence of physical activities on our Sensory Pathway Wall (which has a start and a finish) that are designed to alert, organise and then calm the child. It has been very popular and all the children have enjoyed completing the pathway on their way back from lunch!

### Attendance and Punctuality

At our end of term assembly this afternoon, I presented a number of children with a certificate and an Amazon voucher in recognition of having 100% attendance for the whole of the autumn term! Well done to those children!

**The class with the highest attendance for the Autumn term is Year 4 with an attendance of 95.47%.** What a great achievement! This class will enjoy their class reward (as decided by them) in the Spring Term.

The 100% attendance certificates for the Spring Term will now also take into consideration being on time for school so those pupils who will receive a certificate and an Amazon voucher at the end of the Spring Term will be those who have been at school EVERY DAY AND have arrived at school ON TIME.

### School Office

The School Office is open Monday to Thursday from 8.00am - 4.00pm and 8.00am - 3.30pm on Fridays. The school answerphone is in use outside of these times if you wish to leave message. All messages are picked up at

8.00am. The school office staff are Ms Taylor, School Business Manager, and Miss Clay, Administration Assistant. Miss Cameron is also on the front desk in the Main Reception from 8.50am – 9.15am, every day.

### Data Collection

It is particularly important that we have your current mobile phone number on file in case of emergency contact so if you do change your phone number, or details of your emergency contacts, it is essential you tell us straight away.

### Medication

No child should bring medication to school. If your child is unwell, and has been prescribed medication to be taken during the school day, a parent **MUST** complete a form and the arrangement **MUST** be agreed by the Headteacher **before** any medication is administered. All enquiries regarding medicines should be directed to Miss Cameron.

### School Meals Ordering System – Hutchison's Appetite

Can we please remind parents to order their child's school meals in advance. This will avoid a long queue at the office in the mornings, and ensure children are **NOT** missing valuable learning at the start of their first lesson of the day! The winter menu is now in place with some different hot food choices for the children and we would ask that you encourage your child to have a hot meal at lunchtime, especially in this seasonally cold weather.

### School Uniform / Clothing Rail

Our pre-loved clothing rails are in the Main Entrance. Parents can access school uniform items (polo shirts, trousers, skirts) at no cost. All uniform and other clothing items are freshly laundered before being placed on the rail. If you have any outgrown school sweatshirts or other clothing items in good condition you would be happy to donate, please bring them in. Any contributions will be gratefully received – thank you. We also add new/unused school clothing items regularly. If you are experiencing difficulty in providing your child with school clothing or footwear, please contact the School Office or speak to Miss Cameron, Pupil Welfare Officer. We are here to help.

### Finally...

We close for the Christmas holidays today at 3.20pm. School reopens at 8.50am on Monday 6th January, 2025. On behalf of all of the staff, we send you our very best wishes for a peaceful and fun Christmas season and look forward to our continued successful partnership when we return for the start of the Spring Term, 2025.