OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to October's newsletter. I think we can safely say that the summer days are now behind us and autumn has arrived! The temperature has dropped, the leaves on the trees are turning yellow and brown and blowing in the wind and the evenings are drawing in. We have now come to the end of the first half term and the time has flown by! The children have really settled into their new classrooms and are working really hard in their learning. I am always extremely proud to show round visitors and new parents who always comment positively on the children's behaviour and manners and the warm welcome they receive. However, I always notice how hard the children are working and how they are respectful towards the adults in the classrooms.
Pupils and staff are now ready for their well-earned break and we finish this half term with our traditional Halloween themed day where children (and staff!) come to a 'spookily decorated' school, dressed up in ghoulish costumes, and enjoy our scary and ghostly Halloween parties.

REMEMBER SCHOOL IS CLOSED TO PUPILS TOMORROW (FRIDAY) FOR A STAFF TRAINING DAY

Classroom News

Nursery - Nursery have had a fabulous half term. We have had Irene Frith in from the church sharing a harvest story with the children and leaving fun activities for them to do, based on harvest. We went on an autumn walk where we explored the falling leaves, exploring the colours and the shapes and other signs of autumn. We would like to say a big thank you to all of you who attended our Stay and Play and hope you all enjoyed carrying out activities with the children.

Reception – Reception have loved learning about Harvest and Hallowe'en! We carved pumpkins and we scooped out and explored the seeds and pulp that were inside! We then mixed food colouring, bicarbonate of soda and vinegar and made explosions inside the pumpkins! Linked to our story 'The Little Red Hen', we tasted different types of bread and then we made our own! It was delicious! We loved welcoming our parents into class for the Fairtrade event as well as our stay and play session last week!

Year 1 – October has been a lovely month in Year 1! We have been exploring addition and subtraction in Maths and the children are becoming fantastic at finding different parts of a number to make a whole. We also loved welcoming parents into our classroom for our Fairtrade activities and to share the wonderful work in the children's books. As part of Black History Month, and linking to our previous work on spirals, we explored the work of artist Alma Thomas, who was famous for her colourful, abstract paintings inspired by patterns and nature. The children loved looking at her vibrant artwork and creating their own beautiful pieces on paper plates inspired by her.

Year 2 – In year 2, it has been lovely to welcome parents into our classroom for our BookLook and Fair Trade afternoon. The children enjoyed sharing their learning and showing you what they have been working on. During Black History Month, we explored the lives and achievements of inspirational figures, including Rosa Parks, Mary Seacole and Martin Luther King Jr. The children have been thoughtful and respectful when discussing the challenges these individuals faced and the positive changes they helped bring about. We also created a beautiful display inspired by key words and messages from Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous speech, celebrating the importance of equality, fairness and having a dream for a better world.

The Butterflies - We have had a lovely October in the Butterfly Room, learning all about autumn and how the world around us changes during this season. We have explored the changing colours of the leaves on the trees and watched as they fall to the ground. The children have enjoyed getting creative with a range of autumn-themed crafts using natural resources and beautiful autumn colours. We even made our very own blackberry pie, which we enjoyed eating with squirty cream – definitely a favourite! We have also been exploring the excitement of Halloween through a variety of fun activities, including pumpkins and making our own witches' potions. It was wonderful to welcome our families into the classroom and share our learning environment with them. Thank you to everyone who came along and helped make it such a special experience!

Year 3 - Year 3 have continued their great start to the autumn term, it's been a very busy October! In Maths, we have been looking at informal and formal written methods for addition and subtraction and using what we have learned to solve word problems. In English, we finished our book 'Coming to England' by Floella Benjamin. We have enjoyed learning about her journey to England and wrote a letter, as if we were Floella, to her Grandma. October has been Black History Month and we have learned about and researched influential black people such as Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks and were inspired by what we found out about these people. We really enjoyed the Fair Trade afternoon where we shared our activities with the adults that joined us in class. Our adults also came in for a 'Book Look' afternoon and we loved sharing our work and talking about what we have been doing in our lessons. Lots of us have been to the 'Ready, Set Breakfast Club' for the first time and think the food is delicious! We have also just been awarded Class of the Week, for having the best attendance, for the 7th time in a row!

Year 4/5 - This October, children in year 4/5 have continued showing a keen attitude and interest in our topics and learning across the curriculum. Particular mention has to be made for History, where pupils have shown an inquisitive approach to learning about the Vikings; making judgements and asking lots of questions as well as producing some well thought through and presented written work. In PE, our focus shifted to learning the skills of the game of Hockey and year four children participated in a Hockey event at the Parks, where they got truly stuck in and engaged exceptionally well.

Year 5/6 - For Black History Month, we did some research on famous moments when sport triumphed over racism such as Jesse Owen's Olympic gold medals and Nelson Mandela's speech for the South African rugby team. The mixed class have continued to work well together and we had a very full classroom when we invited the parents into school to have a look at the work they have done so far. In history, we looked at some local census records and hopefully the children will want to find out more about the local area's proud shipbuilding history.

'Do it Fair' Afternoon Tea

Thank you to all the parents who brought a cup and attended our Fair trade event. This helps the children remember that farmers need to be treated fairly and paid fairly for the work they do as they provide us with food that we eat - which is a very important job! We hope you enjoyed joining in carrying out a fairtrade activity with your child in class. Thank you to everyone who took part in our fundraising raffle and well done to the winners - we hope you enjoyed your prizes. We raised £100 that will go to buying outdoor outfits for Nursery so that they can go outside in all weathers.

Parents into Classroom Events

It was great to see so many parents attend our 'Parents into Classroom - Book Look' events over the last two weeks. We hope you enjoyed spending time with your child in their new classrooms and looking through their books to see what wonderful learning they have completed since September. Nursery Class, Reception Class and The Butterflies held 'Stay and Play' afternoons.
Congratulations to those children who received a 'Certificate of Achievement' from their class teacher for this term. They were all well-deserved! Remember that if your child didn't get a certificate this time, they will either get one in our spring term event or the summer term event. We always ensure EVERY child receives a certificate from their class teacher in each school year.

Attendance - Roll of Honour

We now have a new noticeboard in our school hall which shows individual photographs of pupils
a) who have attended school EVERY DAY since September (We call this TERMLY attendance)
b) who have attended school EVERY DAY in the *previous week* (We call this weekly attendance)
The attendance board is updated on a Friday afternoon and referred to in the whole school assembly the following Monday morning. So far, the children are very pleased to see their photograph displayed as it shows improvement in attendance from week to week, not just 100%. They often stop to look during lunchtime and talk about it with their friends and lunchtime staff.

Music Showcase Assembly

At the end of this half term, we enjoyed a wonderful Music Showcase Assembly! Each class stood up and performed a piece of music they had been learning during their class music lessons to the rest of the school. It was fantastic to see the children showing off their singing, actions and instrument playing skills. We are so proud of the enthusiasm and confidence they showed when sharing their hard work with everyone.

Bamburgh / Seahouses Residential

Mr Fadden's class, along with Mr Fadden, Mr Shaw, Miss Woodcock and myself went to Bamburgh and Seahouses last week for an amazing 2 day / 1 night residential in the picturesque Northumberland coastal towns of Seahouses and Bamburgh. We stayed in a beautifully refurbished youth hostel in Seahouses which we had all to ourselves for the two days. The two days were packed full of outdoor activities, including rockpooling and sand art on Bamburgh beach. We had a lovely evening stroll from our hostel to the Beach House Hotel for fish and chips and ice-cream (again, we had the restaurant all to ourselves) and watched the dolphins jumping out of the sea! We enjoyed a presentation from an astronomer, who talked about light pollution and how light is made. The children got to touch and see parts of real meteorites and even a piece of the moon's crust! On the second day, we took the very short coach ride to Bamburgh where we visited St Aidan's church and learned about the life of St Aidan during Anglo Saxon times in Northumberland. We took on the role of archaeologists, looking at replica artefacts and trying to match these with the descriptions of Anglo-Saxons who were buried in Bamburgh. We finished off the day with 'free time' on Bamburgh beach in the glorious sunshine before heading home where most of the children fell asleep on the coach! It was a great experience and I am sure Mr Newsome's class will have an equally enjoyable time when they have their 2 day residential visit to Bamburgh/seahouses on 9th and 10th November. Unfortunately, I won't be going on that trip!!

Parental Consultations

These were held on Tuesday and Thursday of this week. Thank you to those parents who booked an appointment to chat with their child's class teacher to find out how they had settled into the new school year. Thank you for also booking your appointment through the school app. This is a much more efficient way for both parents and the school to manage bookings.

Staffing News

I am delighted to share with you the news that Miss Beattie has had her baby!
Immy (Imogen) was born in the early hours of Monday morning, weighing just over 8lbs. Mother and baby are both doing very well. We send our warmest congratulations to the proud parents and look forward to meeting the new arrival very soon!
We will also be welcoming a new lunchtime supervisor to the team after half term. Sharna, who has three children at Riverside, will be beginning on Monday 2nd November.

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 a message.. All messages are picked up at 8.00am. The school office staff are Miss Taylor, School Business Manager, and Miss Clay, Administration Assistant.

Daily Communication

We have a number of staff available and visible before and after school if you wish to speak to someone or you have a question you'd like answered:

- I am at the gate every morning, from 8.30/8.40am, for questions, queries or just a chat!

- Miss Cameron, Pupil Welfare Officer, is on the Breakfast Club door from 8.10am every morning and on the reception desk in the main entrance from 8.50am – 9.30am, daily. She is also out on the yard at home time.
- Mrs Hall, SENDCo, is out on the playground on a Wednesday and Thursday at the end of the day / hometime

School Meals Ordering System – School Grid

We will be on our new 'winter menu' when we return after half term. There are some new meal choices and a new selection of puddings. The catering company has listened to feedback and consulted with school cooks to decide on a new and varied menu. We think our children will really enjoy the meals on offer. As this will be a *brand new menu* with many new foods and lots of changes, can we please remind parents to order their child's school meals before Monday 2nd November as we don't want any child to be upset or go hungry because they haven't ordered their choice of meal.

Breakfast Club

REMEMBER - We run a FREE daily breakfast club for all children, including Nursery. There is a wide variety of foods to choose from and special diets are catered for. Our weekly menus adapt to the children's preferences - they tell us what they'd like and we provide this (within reason!) We have the very popular 'Bacon Butty' and 'Sausage Sarnie' available on Fridays and we now serve 'Domininc's Toast' once a week too! Dominic's design won the competition during our 'Special Event' week. It is a slice of toast topped with chocolate spread and blueberries! Breakfast Club opens its doors at 8.10am and closes at 8.40am. However, children are welcome at any time within this 30 minute period. We will always offer them food (even if they have eaten at home beforehand) and there is a wide range of activities and games they can take part in with friends.

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 Uniform / Clothing Rails

Our school clothing rail in the Main Entrance was replenished at the start of the new term. Parents can access additional school uniform items (polo shirts, trousers, skirts) at no cost. All uniform and other clothing items on this rail were freshly laundered for September. If you have any outgrown school sweatshirts or other 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 where we will be able to help.

Forward Dates from Monday 2nd November – Friday 18th December

Monday 2nd November	School re-opens for pupils
Monday 9th November	Curriculum Information uploaded to Class Page on website
9th - 10th November	Seahouses/Bamburgh Residential - Mr Newsome's Class (FREE)
Friday 13th November	Children in Need Day (2026 Theme: 'Be someone a child can talk to')
Monday 16th November	Odd Socks Day
16th - 20th November	Anti-Bullying Week – (2026 Theme: "Break the Silence")
Friday 27th November	November's Newsletter published

DECEMBER

Thursday 3rd December	KS2 Panto Trip – 'Jack and The Beanstalk', Theatre Royal, Newcastle
Monday 7th December	Year 5/6 Christmas Party – 1.30pm
Tuesday 8th December	Year 3 Christmas Party – 1.30pm
Tuesday 8th December	Butterflies Christmas Party - 11.00am
Wednesday 9th December	Year 1 and Year 2 Christmas Party – 1.30pm
Thursday 10th December	Nursery Christmas Party - 11.00am – 12.00pm
Thursday 10th December	School Christmas Dinner day (sandwiches WILL be available)
Thursday 10th December	Year 4/5 Christmas Party – 1.30pm
Friday 11th December	Reception Christmas Party - 1.30pm
Thursday 17th December	Christmas Show - Morning Performance (Doors open at 9.15am. Show begins at 9.30am)
Thursday 17th December	Christmas Show - Afternoon Performance

(Doors open at 2.00pm. Show begins at 2.15pm)

Friday 18th December December's Newsletter published

Friday 18th December School closes at 3.20pm for Christmas Holidays

School closes today for the half term holidays and reopens on Monday 2nd November, 2026
On behalf of the school staff at Riverside, I wish you a happy and enjoyable half term break.