



Hugh Joicey

C of E Aided First School

# February

## NEWSLETTER

*Dear parents and carers,*

*I hope this message finds you well. It's great to be back after what should have been a refreshing and restful week off... most of my holiday was spent looking after my poorly children when I should have been skiing - Woe is me! We are eagerly looking forward to a busy and exciting half-term ahead. As the days grow longer and the weather begins to warm, we are excited to take full advantage of the outdoors and engage the children in activities that allow them to 'love nature' even more. We are committed to providing enriching experiences that foster a love for learning and the world around us and we have lots of exciting things coming up this month and through into the warmer summer days.*

### STAFFING

We will soon be interviewing candidates for the office admin post as we go about the very tricky task of finding a replacement for our Mrs Wright (Lynda). We hope to have news about who will be taking over from Lynda soon and we'll keep everyone informed—we know it's such a crucial role for the successful running of our school.



### Transition to Primary



Please keep your eye out for a letter from Governors giving the date of our next information evening to outline the plans for the transition of our school from a first school to a primary school (Tues 1st April 15:30). Mr Roberts and Governors are pleased to have a second meeting for the community to give updates about our plans. We are also expecting to welcome a local headteacher to the session who has been through the process of changing from a first school to a primary school. This was something that parents requested at the last meeting and we're pleased to be able to facilitate this.

In addition, we have been made aware that on Thursday 13th March at 17:00 there is a Public drop-in session at Berwick Academy to outline and explain the future plans for Berwick Academy. NCC have confirmed that the majority of pertinent information will be shared 'locally' by first/primary school but this event is open to the public should you wish to attend.

### SHROVE TUESDAY

Shrove Tuesday was a fantastic occasion in school. As headteacher, it was my first experience of 'pancake day' at Ford and it was absolutely worth the wait. We want to say a huge thanks to Claire, Anne, Janine and Debbie for their hard work. As always the catering on the day was fantastic and the children had a wonderful time eating their pancakes and tasting all the different topping options.

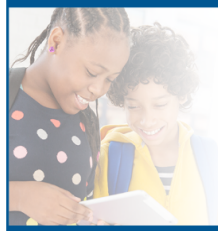


## READING

*In school, we recognise that reading, and a person's reading proficiency, is one of the biggest predictors of educational success. Reading is a vital skill across the curriculum so, understandably, it is a top priority in school. As part of our journey of continuous improvement with reading, we have introduced Accelerated Reader. This*

*keeps a 'live' counter of how much the children are reading. In January there were 63 accelerated reader books read, but in February we have smashed that! 105 books read by our students in February is absolutely amazing. On top of that we have nearly doubled the number of words read; from 126,000 in January to 248,000 in February. It's so pleasing to see the children engaged in their learning and we're so proud of this progress. The challenge now is to continue this amazing progress in March. If your child has an accelerated reader book then as soon as they've finished it they can access a quiz for the book online. Follow the link (which is on the school website under 'Useful Links') <https://global-zone61.renaissance-go.com/welcomeportal/6702148>. We know that our families are incredibly supportive and want the best for their children, fostering a love of reading is so important and we thank you for your support with this.*

Hugh Joicey Church of England First School, Ford Reads!



In February 2025, students have read...

**105** Books

**248,476** Words

for **20** minutes/day!  
(individual student average)

RENAISSANCE  
Accelerated Reader®

## School Dinners

This week, we had our routine Environmental Health inspection. The inspector was very impressed with the hard work, routines and cleanliness of our kitchen. I'm pleased to say that we passed the inspection with flying colours. A huge well done to Claire and the rest of the catering team.



## Safeguarding

We consider safeguarding to be the most important thing that we do in school. Mr Roberts is the safeguarding lead and Miss Carr is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead, they work together to ensure all children are safe, happy and healthy.

Parents should also be aware that we are an 'Operation Encompass' school and an 'Operation Endeavour' school. In addition, Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit has developed guidance for schools for managing knife and offensive weapon carrying and we are ware of this protocol. More information about these initiatives can be found on the safeguarding section of the schools website:

<http://www.ford.northumberland.sch.uk/web/safeguarding/182420>

Any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children should be directed to Mr Roberts.



## *Easy Fundraising Information*

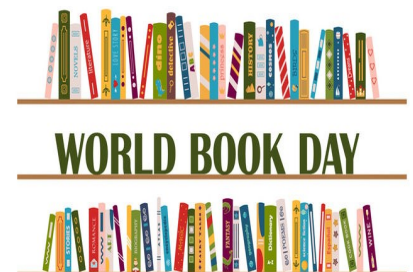
Our wonderful PTA have set up an 'Easy Fundraising' page. Easyfundraising partners with over 8,000 brands who will donate part of what you spend to a cause of your choice; It doesn't cost you any extra as the cost is covered by the brand. The PTA have already raised over £300 for school with this. Please consider following the link below so that you can help to support through school to buy much needed equipment and resources. We continue to be extremely grateful to our very hardworking, dedicated and generous PTA.



## **Curriculum**

Our curriculum is designed to nurture a sense of pride in our local history and surroundings while encouraging our children to engage with the broader, ever-evolving global community. We believe in providing a well-rounded education that equips our students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in the world. To keep you informed and involved, we will be regularly updating our school website with the latest curriculum information and we now have whole school plans (including Years 5 & 6) on the website for the majority of subjects. We value your feedback and if you have any suggestions or questions about the curriculum, please feel free to contact us. We hope you enjoy seeing the exciting learning that is happening each day on Seesaw.

The children had a fantastic day on World Book Day. Staff were amazed with the creativity of the costumes and the wide-range of books that children talked about enjoying. There was a real buzz of excitement in all the classrooms. We hope the children have had chance to use their World Book Day vouchers to further foster a love of reading.



## **Achievements & Events**

The staff were buzzing at the weekend when we saw the mascots Scotland and Wales Six nations fixture. Mils was selected to represent Berwick Rugby club as a mascot at Murrayfield. He was fantastic and he had a great day meeting the players: we're so proud of him.

A number of our pianists have been working hard to prepare for the Edinburgh Music Competition Festival 2025. They've all chosen two pieces to perform to renowned pianist, educator and adjudicator Graham Humphreys. We have no doubt that they'll do the school proud. One of our woodwind players performed in the solo woodwind class last week and received some brilliant feedback from well known clarinettist and adjudicator Paul Harris.

The Year 3 girls represented school fantastically last week at a girls football event. They had a great time at Berwick sports centre and represented the school with talent, flair and tenacity. It was great to see their teamwork!

## **IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE REST OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR**

**STEM week - Week Commencing Monday 10th March**

**Ford Castle (Year 4) Residential - Tuesday 11th March**

**Longridge Cross Country event (Years 2 & 3) - Wednesday 12th March**

**RE Day - Tuesday 18th March**

**Spring Term Parents Consultations - Wednesday 26th March 13.30 - 17.50**

**Conversion to Primary Parent Meeting with Governors - Tues 1st April 15:30**

**Easter Collective Worship - Friday 11th April 13:30**

**Easter Holidays (two weeks) - Weeks Commencing Monday 14th April**

**May Day - Friday 2nd May Commencing at 13:30**

**Summer Half Term (1 week + 1 training day) - Week Commencing Mon 26th May**

**Teacher Training Day - Monday 2nd June**

**Countryside Day - Thursday 5th June**

**Big Sing @ The Sage (Oak and Cherry Class) - Wednesday 2nd July**

**Sports Day/Summer Fayre - Tues 8th July 13:30**

**End of Year Celebration Worship - Thursday 17th July 14:00**

### **SCHOOL FINANCE**

As we approach the end of the financial year, we kindly request your cooperation in ensuring that any outstanding payments owed to the school are settled as soon as possible. Timely payments are crucial in helping us maintain accurate financial records and they support our school operations. If you are facing any difficulties in making the payment, please contact the school office to discuss possible payment plans or support. We are here to help and ensure that all matters are handled with confidentiality and understanding. Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. By keeping your payments up to date, you are directly contributing to the smooth functioning of our school and the quality of education we provide to your children. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

### **Google Form - Parental Feedback**

We would like to invite you to participate in our mid-year parental feedback survey, which is now available for completion online. The survey follows the same format as the questionnaire from the start of the academic year. You can complete the survey online via Google Forms <https://forms.gle/13c4FVgpp9JcX2gV9>

Your feedback is invaluable to us as it allows us to assess the progress we are making in providing the best educational experience for your child and address any concerns you may have. We are committed to ensuring we meet the needs of our pupils and school community; if you have any questions or require assistance please contact us. We thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the survey.

