

Dear Parents,

March 2019

We hope the children have had a good half term and are ready for a busy 6 weeks in school before the Easter break. As usual we have a lot to look forward to and much to celebrate from the previous half term.



Our **Talent Show** was held on 6th February. Our thanks to Mrs Morning and Mrs Brown for organising this and the staff and our Friends of Tanfield for preparing refreshments and ensuring all went smoothly on the night. It is always a big event for us and very well supported. The children spent much time preparing for it and once again we had a great variety of performances including dancing, singing, poetry and magic tricks. It really was an excellent night of entertainment, enjoyed by all who attended.

We started a new tradition at the **Gala Theatre in Durham** when children from our school, along with children from our partner schools Brandon and Langley Moor, performed a musical extravaganza to parents, families and governors on 13th February. Together we already provide a range of opportunities for children to work together including sports festivals and competitions, maths challenge days, a children's conference to explore diversity, activity days and joint residential visits. This year we decided we needed to extend this and were keen to give the children a new experience and continue to develop the work of the partnership. The Year 3 children from each of the schools joined together to share a range of songs while soloists, duos and groups of musicians also performed to a delighted audience. The choirs from Langley Moor and Tanfield Lea, Tanfield's ukulele group, and performances from the musicals 'Matilda' and 'The Greatest Showman' wowed a full house. It was a truly memorable evening for everyone who attended with staff and parents proud of the achievements of all of the young performers who were a credit to themselves and their schools. Thank you to all the parents who have given us such positive feedback following this event.



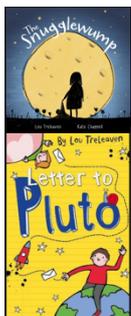
This half term we have a creative week including the arrival of the Book Fair and a visit from the author Lou Treleven, we'll be celebrating Easter in a number of different ways and having our usual inter-school competitions. Please read on for more information about these, and other events.



Our charity for this term is **Comic Relief** on Friday 15th March. They school council would like everyone to come wearing red (as much as possible, but please don't buy anything new) and to bring a donation in. Red noses will also be on sale during the week leading up to the Friday @ £1.25 each.

In addition to this newsletter we will be sending out a Parent Questionnaire on Monday. If you could complete this for us we would be very appreciative. As in previous years there will be an online part to complete (Parent View) as well as a section on paper. We look forward to seeing you in school at some point this half term.

Kay Hemmings (Head Teacher)



Creative Week

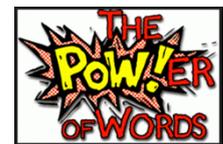
Next week we are having a particular focus on reading and writing. Lou Treleven, author, is visiting us on Tuesday. She'll be working with all children in school throughout the day. Lou is also bringing her books to school and at the end of the day children will be able to purchase these – they will be £5 each. If you'd like your child to have the opportunity to buy one of her books please come to the Lower School Hall at the end of the day.

We have the Book Fair too and, as it's World Book Day, we have the £1 vouchers to give children which they can use to reduce the cost of any book they choose from the Book Fair or to purchase a book out of school. The children won't be able to use these to buy the author's books.

Developing Vocabulary

We've recently been doing some research on the vocabulary children require to successfully understand texts. Miss Ellis has carried out some research with the KS2 children to find out which words they know and can use and which they can't. This has resulted in her compiling a list of words which we are going to focus on for the rest of the year – a word per fortnight – to increase the children's understanding and therefore their vocabulary. We'll tweet the word of the fortnight for Y3/4 and for Y5/6 (they have different ones) and if you can refer to these with the children too then it'll have a greater impact.

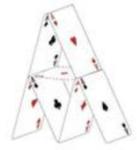
This week the words are for Y3/4 – 'consider' and for Y5/6 – 'amend'.



TESCO Bags of Help – thank you to everyone who has helped us with the Blue Disc collection in our three local Tesco stores. The last day was 28th February so we will find out soon how much we will have been awarded. We have also applied for a Sports Grant for equipment to help further develop healthy minds and healthy bodies. Once we know the total funding we have secured we will look to add further to our playground provision.

Growth Mindset Event

Do you remember building a house of cards when you were younger? Can you remember the feelings of frustration and disappointment when the house of cards fell down or you were unable to do it? To encourage a 'Growth Mindset' we would like to invite you along to build a house of cards with your child. We are hoping to help the children with their perseverance, resilience and bounce back ability skills by giving them a challenge of building a house of cards. Thank you for your continued support in promoting your child's @growth Mindset. It will be held on the 20th May 2019 at 9.am and should only last an hour.



Sporting Competitions

Children from Y3 through to Y6 competed in the local Swimming Gala at the Louisa Centre. They had a very successful morning and were well supported. Children showed great determination and thrived on the competition.

Our Y5 and Y6 children competed in the High 5 competition with Brandon and Langley Moor. Once again, they showed talent and resilience and came away with the trophy! Well done to all involved. Our Y3 and Y4 After School Golf Club also enjoyed their competition.

This term the focus is on a Y1 and Y2 football competition and KS2 Dodgeball (children selected from the Dodgeball After School Club).



Edible Growing Area

Mr Henderson has been extremely busy transforming the tired, littered pond area into an attractive, tidy, functional, natural garden space ready for the planting of produce for the children to grow. The work has been funded by a grant of £2000 we successfully applied for. Children will learn about the necessary conditions for growing and will be taught to care for the plants, ensuring a healthy crop. If you would like to assist with this by giving up some time to do some gardening with the children, please let us know as we'd be very grateful for your help.



Easter Celebration Service



We are starting to plan our Easter Service for all Key Stage 2 children and our school choir. It will take place on Wednesday 3rd April. We'll be celebrating Easter through music and poetry.

The congregation of St. Margaret's Church are welcoming us again, led by Rev. Andy Miller. It's a special venue for the children – giving them another opportunity to perform to an audience through music and the reciting of poetry. These events build children's self-esteem and confidence as well as enabling them to experience an act of worship.

We hope that many parents will be able to join us for this. We are anticipating beginning the service between 1:30 and 1:45 p.m. We will be having an early lunch for KS2 children, all children will then walk to the church and the service will begin once we are all in position – hence the approximate start time. Once the service is finished children whose parents are in attendance will be able to go home with them. The rest of the children will be walked back to school for the end of the school day. We hope we are lucky with the weather, as we were last year.

The choir, musicians and children who are reciting poetry will go to the church that morning for a rehearsal. We are then going to take the opportunity to share our children's talent in the community by taking some of the performers to Stanley Park Care Home to share some of our Easter Celebration with the residents before returning to school for lunch. More information will be given to parents of the children involved nearer the time.

Attendance – The Road to Success

We are always looking at ways to celebrate children's attendance as well as working with families when attendance falls below where it should be. Miss Ellis's class won the class half term prize of £20 before Christmas and celebrated with a bonfire and toasted marshmallows. Mr Temple's class won last half term and are planning how they will celebrate. Every week we randomly select a winning child from every year group who has had 100% attendance that week and at the end of the autumn term those children who had 98% attendance or above received a sticker and those with 100% were awarded a badge. We've discussed this with representatives of children from every year group and will continue to look for ways to celebrate good attendance.

Good attendance and promptness is crucial to good progress and where this is becoming a concern we follow our policy which consists of positive texts for improvement, warning letters or meetings – both with school, and if there is no clear impact of action, representatives from Durham County – and, as a last resort, we will take legal proceedings.

Good attendance and arriving at school on time is linked directly to good progress. In primary schools it is parents who play a particularly important part in ensuring their children are in school as much as possible and are on time. Please work with us to make sure your child has the best opportunity to succeed.



Egg Decorating

Along with the Easter Service we will be holding our annual Egg Decorating Competition.

The Lower School children are asked to bring their pre-decorated egg into school on Thursday 4th April in readiness for competition that day. Preference is given to those eggs that have clearly been decorated by the children with minimal help from adults. The Upper School children are to bring their undecorated boiled eggs (always worth bringing some spare ones) in to school that day, plus any resources they would like to use to assist them in their decorating. Parents of the Upper School children are welcome to come in to school first thing that morning and assist with the egg decorating in class.

Finally, don't forget about the competition for parents - you are very welcome to decorate your own egg and enter the parent competition - all eggs to be submitted on the Thursday too. Thank you.

The 'Grand Showing' of the eggs is on the afternoon of Thursday 4th April when the Friends hold a coffee afternoon, starting from 2 p.m. The choir will sing at the coffee afternoon, there will be a chocolate raffle and it's always good for a catch up with friends.

The raffle is a Chocolate Raffle. For this we ask parents to send in one chocolate egg per family when we have the additional non-school uniform day on Friday 29th March. Thank you in advance for your support with this.



Internet Safety

We sent a tweet out regarding internet safety on Wednesday this week. Just in case you missed it, we wanted to draw your attention to something that you may have heard about in the press recently which could cause your child some alarm when accessing the internet - particularly on

YouTube and WhatsApp. There's advice regarding this from @natonlinesafety Please take time to read this.

The school will help children to learn about staying safe online, but recognises that the primary responsibility for online safety at home lies with parents and carers. Your help is now needed to help your children adopt safe use of the digital technologies at home.

It is important that we are all vigilant when children are using devices and act to ensure they are protected from people who may pose a risk to them. Children can accidentally or deliberately be exposed to illegal, unwanted or unpleasant content, comments or activity online and there are steps you can take at home to minimise this risk. It is always good advice to monitor and support your child's online life and to know who they are communicating with. Careful use of privacy settings also helps reduce risks.

We know that new apps and sites appear daily online and it would be unrealistic to ask parents and carers to understand all of them. The sites and services that your child likes to use may change regularly, but the messages they need to keep themselves safe will remain the same - **think before you post, be kind online and ask for help if something makes you feel worried, upset or uncomfortable.**

At times some unpleasant sites or activities are highlighted on social media, whilst helping to inform parents it unfortunately has the side effect of generating even more hits and drawing even more children's attention to the activity. If you have safeguarding concerns relating to an app or website these should be shared with professionals, (Police or CEOP) and not shared on social media.

School Dinner Money Debt

The governors have recently agreed a 'School Dinner Money Debt' policy. This is now available on the website.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

If parents believe their child might be entitled to Free School Meals please contact the school office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that parents use it if they qualify. We will do whatever we can to help parents with their application if required.

Parents/carers must pay in advance for the school meal via the school office. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of **one** meal. However, this debt must be paid by the end of the week and all future meals must be paid for in advance before meals are provided.

If the debt is not cleared, parents must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch. In a case where a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the school office will telephone the parents and ask them to make payment that day otherwise they must provide a packed lunch before lunchtime or arrange to take their child home for lunch and return him/her in good time for the afternoon session to begin.

We hope that by implementing this School Meals Debt Policy we are able to help parents manage their school dinner money better and at the same time ensure that all money that is for the children's learning is available for the school to spend on the children.



Mobile Phones – Can I remind parents that mobile phones are not allowed in school unless in exceptional circumstances. If you feel your child does need to bring a mobile in then please contact the office in advance to inform us. Once your child comes in to school they must bring the mobile to the office for safe keeping and collect it at the end of the day. Thank you for adhering to this.

After School Child Care

Our Child Care operates every day after school until around 5:30 (slightly earlier on a Friday). More information is available on our website or from the office. Payment should be made in advance of sessions attended. Please note, if there is a problem with regard to pick up for After School Child Care, the mobile number **07427 471782** must be used. Please **do not** use the school number or a leave message on this as after 5 p.m. (and 4:30 on a Friday) there is no one available to pick up those calls. Thank you.

Dates for your Diary	
Monday 4th March	BOOK FAIR this week
Tuesday 5th March	Author Visit - Lou Treleaven – if you get chance, check out her books.
Tuesday 5th March 5:15	SATs Meeting for all parents of children in Y6 – important to attend this
Thursday 7th March	World Book Day (we'll be celebrating reading all week)
Friday 8th March	Healthy Living Activities – children to do a variety of activities during the morning linked to living healthily – raising their awareness of this.
Wednesday 13th March	Class 4B to visit Apple Store in Metro Centre – a.m. visit
Friday 15th March	Fundraising Event organised by the School Council – Red Nose Day – all children to come dressed in as much red today (no need to buy anything special for this) and bring donation (one per family) for the charity
Monday 25th March	PARENT MEETINGS (Whole School) – 3.15pm until 5.30pm
Tuesday 26th March	PARENT MEETINGS (Whole School) – 3.15pm until 5.30pm
Wednesday 27th March	Visit to Waterstones for winning readers in KS2, linked with Accelerated Reader
Friday 29th March	Additional Non-School Uniform – Please bring in an Easter Egg for the Chocolate Raffle
Monday 1st April	All Stars Cricket Roadshow today for Y1, Y2 and Y3 <i>At least half of money for Grinton to be paid by today</i>
Tuesday 2nd April	Y3 Multi Sports Festival @ Brandon
Afternoon of Tuesday 2nd April	Hot Chocolate Reward – for all children in KS2 who have lost no privilege time this half term.
Wednesday 3rd April	Rehearsal for main children involved in Easter service to take place from about 9:30 and then some of the children to go to Stanley Park Care Home to perform too. KS2 Easter Celebration – through music and poetry in St. Margaret's Church We hope all parents of children involved will be able to join us for this special service – starting between 1:30 and 1:45. <i>Children will walk to the church after lunch.</i>
Thursday 4th April	Egg Decorating Lower School children to bring decorated egg in to school today for competition. Upper School children to bring boiled egg and decorating resources to school to decorate egg – parents welcome to come and work with the upper school children in class on this morning – from 8:50 a.m. Friends Coffee Afternoon 2 p.m. –School Choir to sing, plus viewing of all decorated eggs
Friday 5th April	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund (1 per family) Y1/2 Football Competition, KS2 Dodgeball and ABCs @ Brandon
EASTER HOLIDAYS	Monday 8th April to Monday 22nd April inclusive
Tuesday 23rd April	Back to School Y5s from 56T to take part in a Robotics Project at Tanfield School (5 Tuesday afternoons starting today)
Wednesday 24th April	Pre-School to visit Hall Hill Farm