



Dear Parents/Carers,

It's been a very enjoyable week in school with lots of events to help us mark this festive time and staff have worked incredibly hard to make sure all our pupils enjoy their final week. Our Christmas Fayre was hugely successful and raised over £350.00 – thank you! Yesterday's Carol Service at St Cuthbert's was truly magical and if you haven't yet seen some of our photos and video snippets on our Facebook page, do check them out. Further video footage has been uploaded into our Music Classrooms on Google 360 for those of you who would like to watch them.

Staff return to school on Tuesday 4th January for a training day and we look forward to welcoming all pupils back into school on Wednesday 5th January. In terms of Covid-19, the situation is ever-changing and should there be any updates over the holidays, I will write to all families before the start of term.

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas, a good rest, and, enjoy spending time with loved ones!
Lindsay Hamilton

Christmas Lunch!

We were all treated to a wonderful Christmas lunch today – it was delicious! Huge thank you to Neil and his team at The Boe Rigg and our lovely Mrs Breckons for serving so promptly! Needless to say, after such a huge feast, this afternoon wasn't very productive!





Christmas Carols

What a magical morning we had at St Cuthbert's on Thursday! The singing was wonderful and the special performance from our newly-established choir was fabulous. We are incredibly grateful to Ms Esposito for all of her hard work in preparing the whole school for this performance.



Well done to Isla, Y5, who sang a beautiful solo, setting a high standard for all of the singing which followed!



Remarkable Readers!

There's been some wonderful healthy competition this half term amongst our classes with their reading! Pupils have been striving to see who can read the most words, as well as see which classes can become 'millionaires'! It's been 'neck and neck' but our four fabulous winners this half term are.....Angus (Y5), Lucy (Y6), Chantelle (Y7) and Sam (Y8). Collectively, they've read over 1.5 million words. Incredible!



Our new LRC is growing in popularity and it's great to see so many pupils choosing to spend their time in this facility each lunchtime! New, plush seating has made the space even more comfortable and it's now a popular space to chill, read and relax. We must thank our wonderful reading champion, Mrs Batey, who works tirelessly to promote reading across our school and all of our year groups!



Thank you, Mrs Batey!



Northumberland Theatre Company are performing the all-time classic, Alice in Wonderland, next month at Corsenside Parish Hall – just the ticket for brightening up January!





School News



Congratulations and best wishes to Mr Ramshaw and his fiancé as they tie the knot tomorrow! We hope they have a wonderful day and wish them all the very best for their future together.



Many thanks to Mrs Stanners from our wonderful BMSPTCA who kindly organised this term's 'Bag 2 School' event, which raised just under £100! Thanks also to all of those who took the time to have a clear out and drop the bags off in school.



We will be testing all pupils in Y7 and Y8 on their first morning back to school – Wednesday 5th January. As we have done previously, pupils will be kept separate from others until they have been tested and providing they are negative, can return to lessons immediately. **It is very important that pupils continue to test twice weekly throughout the Christmas holidays and continue to report the results too.**



Please do have a look under beds and in the bottom of cupboards during the holidays for any library books which need returning to school. A few have gone home and not yet returned...



Since March 2020, thousands of young people have been sharing their experiences of sexual harassment through the 'Everyone's Invited' project. This is an online platform where youngsters - who are still mostly in school – have described growing up in a world where harassment, including sexualised comments, and the sharing of nude pictures, is part of their everyday lives. Talking to our children about this issue can be hard. Parents sometimes feel uncomfortable, not just because of the sexualised nature of the topic, but also because their children know more about technology than they do. For mums, dads and carers who grew up without smart phones, this whole world can feel bewildering. The Children's Commissioner has worked with parents and young people recently to create a 'starter kit' – an entry point for parents and carers who want to talk to their children but need a bit of support to understand the issues and to start a conversation. The overriding message is **talk early, talk often**. A helpful poster with some top tips can be found on the next page, however, a more detail parents' guide can be accessed [here](#).





Children's
COMMISSIONER

**THE THINGS I
WISH MY
PARENTS
HAD KNOWN**

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S ADVICE
ON TALKING TO YOUR
CHILD ABOUT ONLINE
SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Summary of top tips

- 1** Start speaking to your children about these issues before you first give them a phone or set up a social media account. This might feel very early, but you can do it in an age-appropriate way. It is better to be proactive than reactive.

Don't wait for the crisis.

- 2** Keep the conversation going. Adapt to your child so you can support them.

Don't mention it once and think that's enough.

- 3** Keep it casual, find everyday opportunities to speak about these issues with your child – like when you're walking or driving somewhere.

Don't scare them with 'the big talk'.

- 4** Focus on your child's emotions first and work out what they may have seen online. By listening to your child and understanding if they accessed harmful content, you can help to support them.

Don't punish them before listening and understanding.

- 5** Keep curious about the technology your child is using and stay up to date with platforms, apps and trends.

Don't pretend these issues don't exist

- 6** Set boundaries. Use filtering tools to limit your child's exposure to harmful content. Decide on rules and boundaries with your child, allowing them to input. Explain which monitoring and filtering tools you are using, and why.

Don't leave your child unsupervised online without using monitoring and filter tools. You wouldn't leave them alone in the park or the street, apply the same level of protection online.



Dates for your diary...

Tuesday 4th January 2022

Training Day

Wednesday 5th January 2022

School opens for Spring term

Wednesday 5th January 2022

On-site testing – Y7 & Y8

Friday 7th January 2022

Pantomime, Theatre Royal, Newcastle

(Oh yes, we are - hopefully!)



Everyone at
Bellingham Middle School
wishes you a very
Merry Christmas!

Stay safe.