



Newsletter 4 – Friday 8th November 2024

Dear Cragside Family,

Welcome back to the second half of our Autumn term – the darker nights and chillier mornings have certainly felt evident on our return back to school. Thank you to all of you who were able to join our Harvest Celebrations at St Nicholas' Church and to those of you who very kindly donated to our Harvest collections for the Hope Centre. Earlier this week, I received a letter from the Hope Centre which detailed their appreciation of the food which we were able to donate to them. Thank you to all of our families who have encouraged our children to look out into the community and provide some much needed help and support for families.

I also received a message from a representative at the town council informing me that Cramlington had been awarded 'Gold' in the Britain in Bloom awards. Children and staff in school were proud to be part of this process and to showcase our outside area as part of this.

This coming Monday, our Collective Worship will focus on Remembrance Day. If your child would like to create some poppy crafts over the weekend, I would love to be able to share these during the service on Monday.

Star gazing event at Cragside – A message from Mr Flynnwood

As the cold dark nights draw in, we will be holding a stargazing event at school, hosted by staff from the Kielder Observatory. As part of this event, they will be bringing along powerful telescopes and a large planetarium. The astronomers will deliver workshops and talks. If the weather is unsuitable for star gazing then there will be demonstrations they can do inside. The PTFA will be selling refreshments and some of the children from our stargazing club will be showcasing experiments/demonstrations about space.

The evening will run from **4pm-7pm** and will be on **Wednesday 4th December**. There will be six sessions in the planetarium - each talk lasting 20 minutes, with 20 seats available in each. Further information about how to book this event will be shared via SchoolsBuddy next week.

Bicycles and Scooters

Whilst we love to see the children coming to school on their bicycles and scooters, please can I ask all parents and carers to remind their children that these need to be pushed on the school yards at the start and end of the day. Both of our yards are very busy places during these times and I am conscious that we have very small children, pushchairs, grandparents and everyone in between in these spaces. To keep everyone safe and avoid any accidents, please can you ensure that your child pushes their bicycle or scooter at these times.

Primary School Admissions

The portal to apply for Reception places for September 2024 is now open and I have very much enjoyed welcoming families into school and showing them around our school as part of our Open mornings and afternoons. Please note, that parents of children who attend our Nursery provision also need to apply for a Reception place in our school. The portal can be accessed via the following link:

<https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal LIVE/en>

Please contact our school office for further information about Nursery admissions. I have attached a flier for your information which details the next date for our open morning and afternoon.



**Let Your
Light Shine**

St Matthew's Gospel

Children's use of Social Media – Online Safety

Over the last couple of weeks you may have read concerns in the media around an AI platform called Character.ai. If you've never heard of this platform, it's basically a chatbot service where users (13+) can create and/or chat with existing characters where the chatbot will give human-like responses.

From updates and information that we receive as a school, it is clear that children from Year 3 upwards are using and conversing with chatbots (mainly Snap MyAI which is embedded within Snapchat), but Character.AI takes this to a whole new dimension as people are creating chatbots based on real people, including criminals and other harmful, negative influences.

Research into online safety tells us that some children and young people are becoming obsessed with chatbots, such as giving them names and referring to them as real people. The concerns around this are growing weekly which emphasises the fact that as adults, when we are talking to children and young people we need to be aware of these emerging areas so that we can adequately engage with them.

Internet Matters have put together a 'What Parents Need to Know' article which you can access [HERE](#) for further information.

Parking around school

May I request, on behalf of our children and local residents that all parents and carers are responsible when parking their cars whilst dropping off and picking up their children. As you will be aware from the signage surrounding our school, there are parking restrictions along Westloch Road and Gainsborough Place. These parking restrictions are in place to ensure children, pedestrians and residents stay safe, especially around school drop off and collection times. Please can I ask that all parents and carers adhere to these restrictions and park with consideration and respect to our local residents.

Dates for your diary

Please see below for a list of dates of a range of events which will be occurring during the Autumn term. Newly added dates are shown in blue.

Tuesday 12 th November	Odd Socks Day – children are welcome to come to school wearing odd socks
Friday 15 th November	Children in Need Day – children are welcome to wear Pudsey themed accessories to school
Thursday 21 st November	Flu Immunisations
Saturday 30 th November	Christmas Fayre – 12.00-3.00pm
Wednesday 4 th December	Star Gazing event at Cragside
Friday 6 th December	Christmas lunch and wear a Christmas jumper/accessory
Monday 9 th December	2.00pm Year 3 & Year 4 Nativity
Tuesday 10 th December	9.15am Year 3 & Year 4 Nativity
Tuesday 10 th December	2.00pm Year 1 & Year 2 Nativity
Wednesday 11 th December	9.15am Year 1 & Year 2 Nativity
Wednesday 11 th December	2.00pm EYFS Nativity (Nursery and Reception)
Thursday 12 th December	9.15am EYFS Nativity (Nursery and Reception)
Thursday 12 th December	2.00pm Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas performance
Friday 13 th December	9.15am Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas performance
Monday 16 th December	Am - Nursery Christmas Party Pm – Reception Christmas Party
Tuesday 17 th December	1.30pm Key Stage 1 Christmas Party
Wednesday 18 th December	1.30pm Year 3 & Year 4 Christmas Party
Thursday 19 th December	Christmas Church Services at St Nicholas' Church



	9.30am Year 5 & Year 6 11am Year 1 & Year 2 2pm Year 3 & Year 4 1.30pm Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas Party
Friday 20 th December	End of Autumn term – school closes at 3.15pm
Monday 6 th January	Teacher Training Day – school closed to children
Tuesday 7 th January	Start of Spring term – children return to school

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.
Joanne Parker

