

## Newsletter 6 – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2024

Dear Cragside Family,

As we find ourselves on the cusp of the festive season, the gradual approach of the Christmas period has brought with it a sense of anticipation and joy, which was palpable at our highly successful Christmas Fair last Saturday. For me, this event seemed to mark the official beginning of our Christmas celebrations, and I must express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed to its success, including our Sing-Up group, led by Miss Tuart and Mr Roper, who delivered a confident performance and our wonderful dancers from Little Gems Dance School who also added to the festivities. The Christmas Fair itself was a resounding success, with an impressive turnout that created a wonderful atmosphere. The sense of community spirit was truly heartening. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone involved in organising and running the event. A special mention must go to our dedicated Friends of Cragside group, whose tireless efforts were instrumental in ensuring the fair's success.

While seasonal celebrations are an important aspect of school life, we are balancing this carefully to ensure our commitment to teaching and learning continues to be our primary focus. We have recently welcomed two visitors to our school: Phil Scott, our Local Authority School Partner, and James Lewis, Assistant Director of the Diocese. Both individuals, after spending time in our school, provided positive feedback about the teaching and learning taking place within our classrooms, children's experiences of playtime and collective worship and the quality of our curriculum.

### Star-gazing Night with Kielder Observatory – A message from Mr Flynnwood

Thank you to everyone who came to our wonderful Star-gazing Evening hosted by Kielder Observatory. The weather was against us, but all of the children still had an awesome time exploring the Planetarium and taking part in the other activities which were available. A massive thank you to the Year 5 and 6 Star Club members who did an amazing job demonstrating gravity on different planets, scale in our solar system, how craters are made and helping children, and some adults too, to build rockets to launch at the moon. They showed real commitment, enthusiasm and care when sharing their expertise.

### Northumberland Education School Alliance (NESA)

During the Autumn term, Cragside C of E Primary School has formed an Educational Alliance, known as the Arcot Alliance, with eleven other primary schools in Northumberland. Led by a group of like-minded headteachers, all of whom are striving for the very best for our children, the Alliance provides opportunities for closer working with other similar schools, collaboratively sharing ideas and resources along with ongoing support from Advisory staff within Northumberland County Council. The Alliance will facilitate greater networking for Teachers and Senior Leaders and allow us to experience and share best practice from a wider variety of schools in order to continually improve what we do. Please note that this Alliance is merely a collaboration and not a Federation or the creation of a Multi-Academy Trust. The other schools involved are; Beaconhill Community Primary School, Burnside Primary School, New Deval Primary School, Eastlea Primary School, Holywell Village First School, Horton Grange Primary School, New Delaval Primary School, New Hartley First School, Newsham Primary School, Northburn Primary School, Seghill First School and Seaton Delaval First School.



## Parking around school for Christmas events

During the month of December, our school, like all schools, host a variety of performances and events that parents and carers attend. This can lead to an increase in traffic around the school, during these events. Please find attached a leaflet, produced by Northumberland County Council which provides some clear guidance around keeping the area around our school safe for children, parents, residents and the wider community.

## Christmas Parties

### Early years – Information will be shared by Mrs Clarke

#### Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

At the key stage one Christmas party, the children will play games and share a small amount of food. Please can the children come to school dressed in their party clothes. Please consider if the children may need a change of footwear for playtime and lunchtime play.

Please can children bring a small amount of food to share. Mrs Cant's class and Miss Tuart's class should bring savoury food and Mr Flynnwood's class and Miss Grice's class should bring sweet food. Please can food either be sent in its original packaging or with a list of ingredients if home made to support with allergies.

#### Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

Please can children come to school dressed in their party clothes. We would be very grateful if boys could bring something sweet and girls something savoury. Please can all packaging be included so that we can see the ingredients? For anything homemade, please attach a list of full ingredients.

#### Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 and 6)

As the children will be at Church on the morning of Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December, Y5 and 6 children will need to come to school in their school uniform. The children can bring a change of clothing into school, which they can wear later in the day for their party. We would be very grateful if boys could bring something sweet and girls something savoury. Please can all packaging be included so that we can see the ingredients? For anything homemade, please attach a list of full ingredients.

## Attendance Matters – A message from Mrs Bilton

I am absolutely delighted to share that our current attendance in school is 96.6%. This high rate of attendance puts us in the top 10-20% of schools nationally. This is such wonderful news, and shows that every family fully appreciates how important it is to be in school every day. Well done Cragside families.

Please can I also remind you that if your child has a medical appointment, we now require a copy of this on file. This can be in the form of an appointment card/letter or a screen shot of the text or email with the appointment details, this can be sent to [admin@cragside.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@cragside.northumberland.sch.uk)

If your child is absent due to illness, please inform the school office by 9am for each day of the illness. We have a dedicated line on our telephone system to leave a message for any absences. If we do not receive a reason for your child's absence we will send out a message via SchoolsBuddy asking you to contact school. Unfortunately, any absences which are not reported will be recorded as unauthorised in the registers. We look to avoid unauthorised absence where at all possible, so please do make that daily call to keep us updated.

Finally, please find a useful link below to the NHS guidance for parents for when to keep your child off school:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school>

## Football Success – A message from Mr Freedman

Last week the Year 6 football team were victorious in the Trades Council Cup match beating Ponteland Community Primary School 7-1! A huge well done to all involved as they played fantastically well as a team. Goals were scored by Jacob (a hat-trick!), Gene, Finlay, Alex and Danny. Let's hope this success continues next week!

## 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.

Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	2.00pm Year 3 & Year 4 Nativity
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	9.15am Year 3 & Year 4 Nativity
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	2.00pm Year 1 & Year 2 Nativity
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	9.15am Year 1 & Year 2 Nativity
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	2.00pm EYFS Nativity (Nursery and Reception)
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	9.15am EYFS Nativity (Nursery and Reception)
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	2.00pm Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas performance
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	9.15am Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas performance
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> December	Am - Nursery Christmas Party Pm – Reception Christmas Party
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	1.30pm Key Stage 1 Christmas Party
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	1.30pm Year 3 & Year 4 Christmas Party
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>Christmas Church Services at St Nicholas' Church</b> 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 <sup>th</sup> December	End of Autumn term – school closes at 3.15pm
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January	Teacher Training Day – school closed to children
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	Start of Spring term – children return to school

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.  
Joanne Parker

