

Newsletter 2 – 11th September, 2025

Dear Cragside Family,

The first two weeks of the new school year have been incredibly smooth, with children settling well into their new classes with their new teachers and routines. I'm delighted to see that our very youngest children in Nursery and Reception are busy and purposeful in their play and learning and that new children who have joined classes throughout school have been warmly welcomed by their new classmates.

As many of you will know, we have repurposed some rooms and enhanced other spaces in school during the Summer holidays. The room, previously used for wraparound care, is now Miss Harris' classroom, known as the Nest. In addition to this, our library area has been fully restocked, with new sofas added to it, to create a warm and inviting space for children to read. We are also continuing to repurpose our Out of School Club, adding more soft furnishings, displays etc to this newly created space.



Cragside's academic achievement for 2024-2025

As you may be aware, the Summer term is one of many statutory assessments for some children in school, which helps us to have a clear understanding of children's achievement and progress at various stages of their school journey. I am delighted to say that our children achieved significantly well, in comparison to all schools nationally, which reflects the hard work and commitment to learning of children, staff and families.

	Percentage of children achieving expected standard at Cragside	Percentage of children achieving expected standard nationally
Children achieving a Good Level of Development at the end of Reception	89.4%	66.7%
Year 1 children achieving the expected standard in Phonics	92.3%	80%
Year 6 children achieving the expected standard in:		
Reading	87.5%	74%
Maths	81.3%	73%
Writing	83.3%	72%
English Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling	85.4%	72%



Reading, Writing and Maths combined	70.8%	61%
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Ready, Respectful, Safe

Whilst the children have been settling into their new classes, we are focusing on ensuring appropriate learning behaviours with them, simplifying our school rules so that they are easier for the children to understand. This was a focus for our Teacher Training Day at the beginning of term. Our school rules and expectations are captured through the phrase 'Let your light shine... by being ready, respectful and safe. We are spending time sharing with the children what these learning behaviours look like in our school and community. I am always really proud of our children and am delighted when they show their exceptional manners in holding open doors for others, being ready for learning and ensuring they and others are safe. Thank you also for all of your help which has enabled our children to start the term by being ready, respectful and safe. The children have returned to school looking very smart, wearing the correct school uniform. Thank you to all of those parents and carers who have reminded their children to remove their earrings for school – I have seen a significant difference in this. I appreciate your support with this as this helps our children to be safer in school.

Attendance Matters - Whole School Attendance – A message from Mrs Bilton

Whole school attendance for the first two weeks of the year is looking very positive at 97.1%. Well done Cragside families. As always, we're really keen to improve this further. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there are any issues with your child's attendance at school. Please also very carefully consider taking your child out of school to go on holiday during term time. The impact of this is significant both for your child's academic progress, and their well-being. Being in school, with their peers, is so important for your child.

The Department for Education states-

School attendance is vital because it directly links to academic attainment; near-perfect attendance makes pupils significantly more likely to achieve strong results in core subjects like English and Maths. Beyond academics, school provides essential opportunities for social and emotional development.

Regular attendance is key to developing social skills, building positive relationships, and preparing pupils for adulthood.

Punctuality- Every Minute Matters!

We will continue to work with our Education Welfare Officer Carol Barnfather this academic year. She will be on the school gate next week to support with excellent punctuality. If you are late to school, Carol will be available to support you to get your child to school on time every day.

Our driving ambition for the children, as always, is at the absolute forefront of this. We want the very best for every child.

As you can see, lateness=lost learning.

Our school day starts at 8.45am, with the doors opening at 8.30am each day.

LATENESS = LOST LEARNING

5 mins late each day 3 days lost!

10 mins late each day 6.5 days lost!

15 mins late each day 10 days lost!

20 mins late each day 13 days lost!

30 mins late each day 19 days lost!





DANGER ZONE: AS FEW AS 19 MISSED DAYS over the school year reduces your chances of success. Your SATs or GCSE results could drop by one grade across all subjects!

Top Year Group Attendance

Year 3 currently have the top attendance for this new academic year. At 98.8% attendance, we are delighted about this brilliant start. Well done Year 3.

Dates for your diary

In order to help you to organise your diaries, I am sharing this overview of the Autumn term with you, so that you can plan ahead. I will add any further dates as they arise, on future newsletters.

Friday 12 th September	Northumberland County Council Online Admissions portal opens for Year 6 parents/carers to complete Secondary school applications
Wednesday 24 th September-Friday 26 th September	Year 6 Residential visit to Robinwood
Friday 3 rd October	2.00-3.00pm – Reception Meeting with families
Wednesday 8 th October	Nursery Stay and Play sessions – further information to follow
Wednesday 8 th October	3.30-6.00pm Parent consultation meetings in school (the PTFA will be providing refreshments during this session)
Thursday 9 th October	3.30-6.00pm Parent consultation meetings in school (the PTFA will be providing refreshments during this session)
Tuesday 14 th October	8.00am onwards – Individual and family photographs taken in school
Thursday 23 rd October	Harvest Festival Church Services at St Nicholas' Church 9.30am Year 5 & Year 6 11am Year 1 & Year 2 2pm Year 3 & Year 4
Friday 24 th October	Teacher Training Day-school closed to children and half term begins
Friday 31 st October	Online Admissions portal for secondary school applications closes
Saturday 1 st November	Northumberland County Council Online Admissions portal opens for September 2026 Reception intake – please note that parents/carers of children in Nursery need to complete this for a place in our Reception class
Monday 3 rd November	Children return to school following Autumn half term
Tuesday 18 th November	Flu immunisations
Monday 8 th December	2.00pm Year 3 & Year 4 Nativity
Tuesday 9 th December	9.15am Year 3 & Year 4 Nativity
Tuesday 9 th December	2.00pm Year 5 & Year 6 Nativity
Wednesday 10 th December	9.15am Year 5 & Year 6 Nativity
Wednesday 10 th December	2.00pm EYFS Nativity (Nursery and Reception)
Thursday 11 th December	9.15am EYFS Nativity (Nursery and Reception)
Thursday 11 th December	2.00pm Year 1 & Year 2 Nativity
Friday 12 th December	9.15am Year 1 & Year 2 Nativity
Monday 15 th December	Am - Nursery Christmas Party Pm – Reception Christmas Party
Wednesday 17 th December	Am - Whole School Pantomime gifted by the PTFA 1.30pm Year 3 & Year 4 Christmas Party
Thursday 18 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 1 & Year 2 Christmas Party
Friday 19 th December	1.30pm Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas Party End of Autumn term – school closes at 3.15pm
Monday 5 th January 2026	Teacher Training Day – school closed to children
Tuesday 6 th January	Start of Spring term – children return to school

Many thanks for your ongoing support.
Joanne Parker



**Let Your
Light Shine**

St Matthew's Gospel