

Newsletter 3 – 3rd October, 2025

Dear Cragside Family,

Last week, our Year 6 children had a fantastic time on their residential trip to Robinwood. They really did us proud – encouraging one another, showing great determination to push themselves when activities felt challenging, and treating the Robinwood staff with such kindness and respect that several staff commented on what a joy they were to spend time with. It was a privilege for us to share this experience with the children and to see them shine in a completely different setting. Well done to all of those children in Year 6 who joined us at Robinwood. Last week, we welcomed James Lewis into our school, Deputy Director of Education at the Diocese, who spent time with myself undertaking a learning walk around school and then with a group of children who spoke knowledgeably and with confidence about their learning in school and what it means to come to be part of our school community. Thank you also to Reverend David Gray who came in to school to demonstrate what a baptism looks like to some of our younger children.

Open Days for children who are due to start Reception in September 2026

Over the next few weeks, we are hosting a number of Open Days for families who have children joining Reception in September 2026. This will give families of these children an opportunity to see our whole school, including our Forest School provision, our Receptions settings and then the chance to look around school to see where the children learn once they leave Reception and join Year 1. The dates for these sessions are:

- Monday 20th October (9.15am and 4.30pm)
- Thursday 6th November (9.15am and 5.30pm)
- Saturday 15th November (9.30am)

To book a place for one of these sessions, please email admin@cragside.northumberland.sch.uk or go to our website <https://cragside.northumberland.sch.uk>.



The flyer is divided into two main sections. The left section features a photo of a young girl in a red school uniform, with a circular badge asking 'IS YOUR CHILD DUE TO START SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2026?'. Below this, it says 'Discover Cragside CofE Primary School' and lists the open day dates. The right section features a photo of children playing football, with a circular badge showing a map of the school location. Below this, it says 'What our parents say about us' and includes a quote from a parent. Both sections include a QR code and contact information for booking.

Discover Cragside CofE Primary School

Cragside CofE Primary School Open Days
Come and see how our caring community and inspiring spaces help every child to shine bright

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- Thursday 6th November (9.15am and 5.30pm)
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To book a place visit: 

or email admin@cragside.northumberland.sch.uk or call 01670 714200
<https://cragside.northumberland.sch.uk/>

What our parents say about us

"It is a genuinely lovely school - all the staff are so helpful and friendly and we really appreciate the focus on values - kindness, consideration for others and being the best person you can be.
....We are in no doubt whatsoever that she is immersed in a fantastic, caring culture when she is at school, and this really does have a positive impact."

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Attendance Matters: A school update from Mrs Bilton

Why does good attendance matter? 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 academic attainment, 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.

Whole School Attendance

I am delighted that we have maintained our strong start to whole school attendance. At 97%, we are in the top 10-20% of schools nationally. As always, I'm really keen to maintain this position, and improve it if possible. With that in mind, please don't hesitate to be in touch if there is anything at all I can do to support with your child's attendance.

Punctuality- Every Minute Matters!

We are continuing 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.

Top Year Group Attendance

Year 3 currently have the top attendance for this new academic year. At 98.3% attendance, we are delighted about this brilliant start. Well done Year 3...again! You were in top spot last time too. What a great start to Key Stage 2.

World Mental Health Day - A message from Mrs Urwin-Clark

Next Friday, the 10th October, we will be celebrating World Mental Health Day. The aim of the day is to spread awareness about mental health and the importance of looking after it. The day is a chance for everybody to talk about mental health and emphasise how important it is to reach out if you're struggling. **This year's theme, set by the World Federation for Mental Health, is access to services - mental health in catastrophes and emergencies.** The theme highlights the importance of people being able to protect their mental health whatever they're going through, because everyone deserves good mental health.

Kindness Ambassadors - A message from Mrs Urwin-Clark

We are very excited to tell you that we have signed up to The School of Kindness 'Kindness Ambassador' programme. We are now part of a network of schools with the common goal of spreading kindness. We know there are so many kind children in our school, filled with ideas of how to spread kindness. We want to help unlock those ideas, share good practice and help to embed a culture of kindness in our classrooms and beyond. A child from each class has been selected for this important role for our school and further information will follow.

Times Tables Rock Stars – A message from Mr Beck

Today we begin our first monthly Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) competition for Years 1-6. There will be prizes on Friday for the pupil in each class who scores the most points as well as a prize for the class that answers the most questions in each phase (KS1, LKS2 and UKS2).



Please encourage your child/children to take part over the next few days and score as many points as they can for themselves and their class. Don't forget, points can also be turned into costumes and accessories for their avatars on the TTRS shop.

Children's attachments to electronic devices

Phones and tablets have become comfort blankets for many children. Whether it's to self-soothe, seek approval or escape boredom, we are seeing digital devices are taking up a bigger emotional role in young lives. The attached guide looks at how tech attachment develops – and how to spot when it's becoming a problem.

With expert advice from digital wellbeing specialist Philippa Wraithmell, the guide shares practical ways to build healthier screen habits at home or school. From sleep disruption to struggles with self-esteem, it's a helpful resource for supporting children to use tech more mindfully and reconnect with the world beyond the screen. Please take a look at how you can support your child to have greater balance with their device usage.

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 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)
Friday 10 th October	World Mental Health Day
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