



Newsletter 4 – Friday 17th October 2025

Dear Cragside Family,

I hope everyone is well...it certainly feels that it is time for the winter coats to be coming out, as the evenings become darker and the air feels more crisp. Over the past two weeks, Year 3 have had the opportunity to take part in Hoopstarz and have been using the skills that they have learnt during playtime and lunchtime. It was also great to see so many of you attending our parent consultation sessions and to hear from you how well you felt your child was settling into the new term. If you were unable to attend one of these sessions, please contact your child's teacher to arrange an alternative time to meet.

Well done to our October Times Tables Rockstars winners! There was an air of anticipation during our Shining Stars assembly last week as the children eagerly waited to hear who the winners of this month's competition were. It was wonderful to hear the winners being announced and to feel the competitive spirit between different classes. Nearly 100,000 questions were answered in total – a super achievement. Well done to everyone who took part. Please keep an eye out for an email with details of the November competition and encourage your child/children to take part. Thank you!

Bicycles and Scooters

Whilst I 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.

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

On Monday, we have our first Open Day for families who have children joining Reception in September 2026. This will give families of these children an opportunity to see our whole school as well as our Reception settings. 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>.

Primary School Admissions

The portal to apply for Reception places for September 2026 opens on 1st November 2025. **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

Secondary School Admissions

A reminder to our Year 6 families that the closing date for applications for Year 7 school placements is **31st October, 2025**. Please ensure that an application has been made, via the admissions portal, with your preferred secondary school option.





Mukuge Primary partnership in Rwanda

Many thanks to all Cragside families. We have added the money together from last academic year's events and the money is now on the way to Mukuge Primary School in Rwanda. We will be sending **£887.25**. The next step is to let the children decide what is needed as they become advocates for change. We have already bought them a water tank, some uniforms, stationary, shoes, seeds for a sustainable community garden and some basic PE equipment. I know the children were keen to put it towards a roof as theirs is leaking water but there are still many things they need. I will keep you updated. Thanks again for your support!

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.

Children's use of Social Media

We all want our children to be safe whilst they are using the internet and our curriculum in school gives children the knowledge and skills to help keep themselves safe. This is also an important area where we really appreciate parents and carers reinforcing the same message at home too. We all want the very best for every child and it is important that they are protected from unsuitable online content and have a healthy balance between screen time and other activities. The digital world is a large part of all our lives and brings with it many positives. In spite of this, it is also important to be aware of the dangers and risks that the internet poses to children.

As well as parental controls and filters, it is also important to monitor how much time a child is spending on digital devices. Some tips to support this include:

- Setting up a timetable or rota to clearly identify where your child is allowed screen time.
- Where possible, ensure that your child remains in the room with you at all times, during their allocated time on a device.
- Making sure that you are aware of what your child is accessing online and who they are communicating with
- Have relevant parental controls or protection in place on PCs, laptops, mobile phones, tablets and streaming services of TVs and games consoles.

It is also important that parents and carers adhere to the age restrictions for apps and sites. Here are some of the popular ones for quick reference:



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Social Media Age Restrictions



It is always better to wait until the required age to join any social media service. These rules around age relate primarily to privacy, but are also relevant to safety. Some services offer additional protection to users who are under 18 and by supplying a fake age, children can potentially lose some of this protection. This means children are exposed to content which is intended for older users. More information about this can be found using the following links:

<https://www.common sense media.org/>
<https://saferinternet.org.uk/resource/thinkuknow-advice-from-ceop>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Attendance Matters – A message from Mrs Bilton

Why does good attendance matter?

The Department for Education (DfE) states that;

“School attendance is important for equipping your child with skills for life and that every day at school counts because even a few days of missed school can significantly impact a child’s education and future. Good attendance is linked to social and mental wellbeing, academic success, and helping a child achieve their full potential.’

Whole School Attendance

I am delighted that we have maintained our strong start to school attendance. At 96.5%, we are still 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!

Our EWO, Carol Barnfather, was in the school on Monday morning. She was available at the Main Entrance to support with any issues you may have with getting your child to school on time. To further support punctuality, Miss Harris has organised a ‘Wobbly Mornings’ session on Thursday the 20th of November at 9am – 10am. The purpose of the workshop is to give parents strategies to manage those wobbly mornings. The session will cover:

- Morning routines
- Bedtime routines

Cragside Church of England Primary School

Westloch Road, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6LW

☎ 01670 714200 ✉ admin@cragside.northumberland.sch.uk 📍 CragsideCEPrimary

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- Use of electronic gadgets
- Grounding techniques
- Distraction techniques
- Attachment
- What help kids sleep
- Lessons missed and the impact.
- This sounds like a great opportunity to listen, and share some top tips and techniques, to make mornings as smooth as possible.

Punctuality is such an important part of school attendance, we're always here to help or support in any way, please just ask.

Top Year Group Attendance

Year 3 are still on the top attendance spot! At 95.1% attendance, we are delighted about this brilliant achievement. Well done Year 3...again! You were in top spot last time too. What a great start to Key Stage 2.

Postcards

I very much hope our Great Attendance postcards found their way to some Cragside families this week. Our focus for our first postcard drop was with our Reception children. So, those children on 100% attendance in Reception should have received a postcard. Well done if you received one, what a brilliant start to your years at Cragside!

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.
Joanne Parker

