



## Newsletter xx – Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2026

Dear Cragside Family,

Welcome back to a new year and a new school term. I hope that you had a joyful time over the holiday and that you found time to enjoy some 'togetherness' over the holidays. On behalf of all of our staff team, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and healthy New Year. I would also like to say a huge thank you for the kind donations which you sent into school as part of our kindness advent. These were gratefully received by the Hope Centre who sent an appreciative letter to the children this week. I would also like to share our appreciation and gratitude for the kind words and gifts which families shared with our staff at the end of the Autumn term. Your kindness was very much appreciated by all.

As we begin a very chilly Spring term, we have warmly welcomed a number of new children into our Nursery setting, as part of our January intake and it has been wonderful to see these children explore the setting and become familiar with the routines and activities which take place within the setting. We have also welcomed a number of new children into a number of different year groups at Cragside and I have been delighted to see how quickly these children already feel like part of our Cragside family.

As we begin a new year and a new term, I'd like to take this opportunity to remind you of a few things:

### Some reminders....

Please ensure that all school uniform is clearly labelled. We have an increasing amount of unnamed sweatshirts, hoodies and coats which we are unable to relocate with their rightful owners! Children should be wearing a white polo shirt, red sweatshirt or cardigan (with or without or school logo) and grey trousers or skirts. PE kit should be worn on PE days and must consist of a plain black joggers/leggings, a plain black sweatshirt or Cragside hoodie and a plain white t-shirt. I aim to make our school uniform as affordable and accessible as possible for all families and children should not be coming into school in any branded items. A reminder also that children should not be wearing earrings in school. Our Friends of Cragside team have a wide selection of preloved, sustainable uniform items for children in our school. Please let myself, our office team or the PTFA team know if you would like to access any of these items. Please can I also remind you that children are allowed to bring healthy snacks and water into school.

With regards to mobile phones, only children in Years 5 and 6 are allowed to bring these into school. We have systems in place to ensure the safe and secure storage of these devices throughout the school day. Children in other year groups are not allowed to bring a mobile phone into school.

### Stargazing Event – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January – A message from Mr Flynnwood

It is with great excitement that I would like to invite you to come along to our stargazing event on Monday 12th January. You are welcome to arrive any time between 4.30pm and 6.00pm. The event ends at 6.30pm.

During this event, we will be hosting astronomers from Kielder Observatory. They will be conducting stargazing outside and if the weather is poor, demonstrations with their equipment indoors. There are also demonstrations and investigations being run by our own Space Club members from Years 5 and 6. This event was wonderful last year and I look forward to seeing more happy faces next week.

For those who have tickets for the planetarium talks, please can you arrive promptly at your allocated time. Unfortunately, due to high demand, there are no more tickets available for this.

### Visit by Northumbria Police

Northumbria Police's Prevention Through Education Team will be visiting our school on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> January 14<sup>h</sup> to deliver sessions to children in Years 5 and 6 about bullying, including Cyberbullying. The workshop aims to help children understand what bullying is, how to deal with it safely, and how to get help. Please see the attached parent/carer e-leaflet for information about bullying/cyberbullying and how to get support.

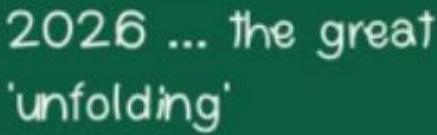


## Climate Change Champions – A message from Mrs Beacher

We're excited to announce that our school now has a dedicated team of Climate Change Champions who will be leading the way in helping us care for our environment. Throughout the year, they will be monitoring how we use energy and water in school, encouraging everyone to switch off lights and devices when not in use, use water wisely, and find simple ways to reduce waste. To keep the momentum going beyond the classroom, we'll also be setting fun, fortnightly

Climate Change Challenges for families to complete at home, helping everyone make small changes that add up to a big difference. Together, we can build positive habits, protect our planet, and show that even simple actions can create a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Have fun completing your first fortnightly challenge!



A new year ... how would **YOU** choose for your 2026 story to unfold?

Have you ever done any origami?

Join us making a 2026 'fortune-teller' or 'chatterbox' – on the theme of 'protecting our natural world'.

Launch the 'great unfolding' by playing the game with a member of your family. Ask them to join you as part of your 2026 story – and help you take action this year.




Our first key date is 'Energy Saving Week'. This will take place week beginning Monday 19th January. Our Climate Change Champions, will spend time this week in classrooms, monitoring our energy use and record the ways, in which we save energy.

## Attendance Matters – An update from Mrs Bilton

Whole school attendance for the first week of the term is looking very positive at 97.9%. Well done Cragside families. The Christmas break has obviously really helped the children to feel rested and ready for all of the joys of being in school very day. I've heard so many families say how happy they are to get back to the routine!

Given how important good attendance is, we're always keen to improve. 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.



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**Let Your  
Light Shine**

St Matthew's Gospel



## Postcards and Gold certificates.

Oh my goodness, my hand was aching from signing so many postcards and certificates at the end of last term. I was very happy with it though! There was a huge pile of 100% attendance postcards and certificates. Hopefully they are all proudly on display at home now.

## Punctuality- Every Minute Matters!

We will continue to work with our Education Welfare Officer Carol Barnfather this term. 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.

## Primary School Admissions

Just a reminder to our Nursery families that the portal to apply for Reception places for September 2026 is still open.

The portal can be accessed via the following link: [https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal\\_LIVE/en](https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en)

Please note that this portal closes on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026. Parents of children who are currently registered in our Nursery need to apply for a place in our Reception classes, if you would like your child to be offered a place in our school. If you would like to look around our school, please contact our school office to make an appointment.

## Extreme Weather and any other Emergency School Closure

In the event of extremely poor weather, the school has procedures in place to try and keep parents and carers informed and to try and keep school open. The information below summarises our procedures:

### On a very icy or snowy day the procedure is:

- **For those who enter by Mrs Parker's gate**, there is a main path created over the yard marked out by cones. Please use this route and enter school building using the normal Y3/4/5 entrance or by the normal Y1/2 entrance. If you are in Year 6, please enter via the nearest entrance and then walk through school to access your cloakroom. Reception and Nursery families should walk along the coned path and then walk past the Main Entrance to access Early Years classrooms.
- **For those who enter by the Westloch Road entrance, Mrs Bilton's gate** please walk along the gritted path. Early Years children go in through their green gates. Children in other year groups walk around to the Main yard, past the Main Entrance and go in through their normal doors.

### In the event of the yard being inaccessible (e.g. thick snow or ice which we have not been able to clear) the procedure is as follows:

- We will keep the green gate (where Mrs Parker is based) closed to prevent access to the main yard.
- We will send a message out to families informing you that the gate will be closed.
- Access to school will be via the Westloch Road entrance (children to enter school via the main school entrance and walk through the school to the appropriate cloakroom)-additional staff will be on the main door to help with this.

### In the unlikely event of the school needing to be closed (e.g. staff not able to get to school because journey to school from home is impossible, boiler failure or flooding...) the procedure is:

- We will use SchoolsBuddy to message all families as soon as possible - please make sure that the School Office have up-to-date contact information





- Northumberland County Council will add information on its website ([www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)) on the schools closure section which is on the front page
- We will contact Radio Newcastle and ask that they make an announcement

## Dates for your diary – Spring term 2026

During the Spring term, we would like to welcome you into school to give you the opportunity to come and see teaching and learning in our school and to actively participate in a learning activity with your child. These sessions will be held in the school hall and will begin at 9.00am. They will last approximately 45 minutes, but this may vary depending on the content and age of the children.

Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> January	Kielder Observatory Family Stargazing Event
Tuesday 13 January and Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	Northumbria Police visiting Years 5 and 6 to deliver workshops around Bullying and Cyberbullying
w/c 19 <sup>th</sup> January – Energy Saving Week	Climate Change Champions monitoring our energy use and providing top tips to classes. Year 5 Skipping Workshop at Cragside
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Year 6 Table Tennis taster session at Cragside
Friday 23rd January	Reception Curriculum morning for parents
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 6 Curriculum workshop and SATs Information session for parents and carers
Wednesday 4th February	Year 3 Curriculum Workshop
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> February – Children's Mental Health week commences	
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Safer Internet Day
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February	Parent/Carer Consultation Meetings 3.30-6.00pm
Thursday 12th February	Year 2 Curriculum Morning for Parents
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	3.15pm – School closes for Spring half term holiday
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Children return to school following the half term holiday Fairtrade Fortnight begins
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	Parent/Carer Consultation Meetings 3.30-6.00pm
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day
Thursday 12th March	Year 5 Curriculum Workshop
Wednesday 18th March	Year 4 Curriculum Workshop
Thursday 19th March	Year 1 Curriculum Workshop
Thursday 26th March	<b>Easter Church Services at St Nicholas' Church</b> 9.30am Year 5 & Year 6 11.00am Year 1 & Year 2 2.00pm Year 3 & Year 4
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Judging Day – Decorate an Easter egg competition
Thursday 2nd April	3.15pm – End of Spring Term
Monday 20th April	8.45am – Children return to school for beginning of Summer term
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May to Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	– Year 6 SATs
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June to Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	– Year 4 Multiplication Check
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> June to Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	– Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

Many thanks for your ongoing support. Have a lovely weekend.

Joanne Parker

