



October 27th 2023

End of Half Term

As we come to the end of one of the longer half terms, it is nice to reflect on what has been a busy, productive and rewarding start to the academic year. A great deal has been achieved. From our youngest children settling into new routines of nursery and school life, to our older children learning new facts and gaining responsibilities, the half term has whizzed by.

I hope that you were able to meet your child's teacher this week and gain an insight into how they have begun the academic year. It is always nice to see children's books and build positive relationships with your child's teacher. I was delighted to be able to chat to many of you over the two afternoons and appreciate your kind words about our school.

Senior leaders and I have been in and out of classes a lot over the past few weeks and we were once again impressed with our children's learning behaviours and the work they produce. We talk about our values regularly and our children endeavour, collaborate and are inspired to be the best that they can be. Now it is time to rest and recharge as we look forward to a lovely part of the school year. Please see the Dates for the Diary section with some important festive dates.

Good luck Miss Moody

Miss Moody informed me earlier in the year that she intends to leave Montalbo today as she begins a new chapter in her life, working for her family business. We have thoroughly enjoyed seeing Miss Moody's confidence grow and she has become a very skilled professional, joining us first as an apprentice before qualifying as a Teaching Assistant. We had a fun Hallowe'en themed leaving assembly for her today. I would like to thank her for all of her work in Nursery and from all of us at TeamMonty we wish her the very best for her future.

We have made an appointment this week to replace Miss Moody and I will let you know more once all the relevant checks have taken place.

Halloween Fun

This week we have had discos for all years and great fun has been had by all. Click [here](#) to see some photographs of children in their amazing costumes!

The Lions Club International Roar Project

This week I was asked to be on the panel to watch and listen to presentations from our Year 6 children as they pitched their ideas to solve a problem. The groups presented a range of solutions to problems: a reversible football kit which had home and away colours on either side, an aid for visual impaired swimmers, a medical robot, a tennis racquet which measures speed, a smart watch powered by kinetic energy and a robot which picks up litter. The children wowed all of the panel with their presentation skills and I was equally proud of how they talked about working as a team to overcome differences or difficulties with the prototypes. I am very grateful to Bob Garton and the President of the Teesdale Lions, for inviting us to participate and for Bob's knowledge which he has shared with the children over the past few weeks. Thanks also to Helen Smith, the Early Talent Lead, from GSK who was on the panel and commended the children for their excellent presentations.

Sponsored walk

Over last weekend, Alice (Y2), Ollie (Y4) and Noah FH (Y6) walked from Middleton to Barnard Castle to raise money for Teesdale Cancer Research. What a great effort – well done to you all!

Pineapple Harvest!

This week we harvested our very first pineapple from the polytunnel and I am sure the Year 3 children who tasted it with me thought it was delicious too! We decided to try and turn one side of the polytunnel into a tropical area and the rest will follow next year. Hopefully, in time it will become like a jungle which will be a really exciting resource to use with our children.

Fire Service Assembly

This week we were visited by the Fire Service who talked to the children about the importance of keeping safe on and around Bonfire Night.

Eco Committee Applications

Thank you very much to all of the children who handed in applications to be part of our Eco Committee. I will announce the committee members during the first week back after half term.

Barnard Castle Band

Suzanne Hunter, who plays for Barnard Castle Band, is interested in attracting some children to the band. There are a number of children in Year 5 who may like to attend these sessions. They can attend, even if your child does not currently receive any tuition. The band players will help and guide them and will have instruments for the children to use. The first session is at Glaxo Sports and Social Club at 5.30pm on October 29th. There is no charge for these sessions. To confirm your interest, please email Suzanne – suzannehunter@hotmail.co.uk

Christmas Fayre

School and FOMs will be hosting our annual Christmas Fayre on November 30th. I know that regular visitors really enjoy this and we do too. There will be a great mix of stallholders and activities to do. If you would like a stall at our Fayre, please contact the School Office.

Those who have been to a Christmas Fayre in the past will appreciate the scale of the event. We will not be able to offer after school care on November 30th as every available space is used.

Reception School Places

The window for applying for school places for Reception places in September 2024 is now open. To apply, please visit [here](#). Once on the site, you can apply online through the Parent Portal or if you prefer a paper application please contact Durham School Admissions on 03000265896.

Secondary school admission process

The application process for the Secondary School Admissions 2024 Intake is open. Parents/carers can make their application for Secondary School online by visiting www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions. The closing date for Secondary School Applications is the 31st October 2023.

If parents do not wish to apply online they can complete a paper application form, and these are available on request from the School Admissions Team.

These application forms can be requested by e-mail to schooladmissions@durham.gov.uk or by telephone from the School Admissions and Transport Team on 03000 265896.

Holidays

I hope that all of our children and families have a lovely half term. We look forward to seeing the children on Monday 6th November.

Attendance

Below is a summary of attendance for this week.

Class	Attendance (%)
Reception	99.1%
Year 1	96.2%
Year 2	94.6%
Year 3	93.3%
Year 4	96.7%
Year 5	100%
Year 6	96.9%
Whole School %	96.5%

Dates for the Diary

October 30 th – November 3 rd	Half term
November 8 th	All Reception to Multiskills (Staindrop)
November 8 th	FOMS Meeting 5.15pm all welcome
November 10 th	Selected Key Stage 2 Children Cross Country
November 15 th	15 Year 1 to Multiskills (venue tbc)
November 16 th	All Year 4 to Multiskills
December 5 th	Reception Nativity (1.45pm)
December 6 th	Year 1 and Year 2 Christmas Play (1.45pm and 6pm)
December 12 th	Nursery Christmas Show (1.45pm)
December 15 th	Christmas Carol Service in St Marys (Y3, 4, 5 and 6)
December 15 th	Our Christmas Jumper Day
December 18 th	Nursery/Reception Party (am) Year 1/2 Party (pm)
December 19 th	Year 3/4 Party (am) and Year 5/6 Party (pm)
December 20 th – January 2 nd	Christmas Holidays
January 3 rd	Teacher Training Day
January 4 th	Children return to school

Mr. C Minikin
Head Teacher

Please see the QR code for the School Lottery. The more players we have, the more we raise for the school and the bigger the prize fund.

