



March 15<sup>th</sup> 2024

### **Shakespeare Rocks**

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings we were treated to two wonderful performances of *Shakespeare Rocks* by our children in Years 3 and 4. I was so proud of all of the cast as they acted, sang and danced brilliantly throughout the performances. The confidence the children showed is wonderful and to be able to speak clearly in front of large audiences will be a valuable skill to take forward. It was a complex play with humour, some big words and lots to remember and the children certainly rose to the occasions. These performances will last long in the children's and adult's memories and my office wall is adorned with many programmes from my time here. Well done Years 3 and 4!

A huge thank you also to our fantastic team of staff. Mrs Smith, Dr Blezard, Mrs Bowron, Mrs McIntyre and Mrs Wood who worked tirelessly to help the children and were so creative with the props and costumes. We were all amazed and grateful to Mrs Wood for her creative skills with the costumes – the children looked fabulous! Well done team Monty!

### **Key Stage 2 Tree Planting**

Monday saw two staff from OASES support children in Key Stage 2 to plant a number of trees on the field and in the Railway Heritage Garden. The areas look like scenes from the aftermath of Glastonbury with all of the recent rain! Well done to the children for making a positive difference and helping the environment.

### **Comic Relief**

On Friday we contributed to Comic Relief and the children looked great in their bright colours and costumes! In Tuesday's assembly, Mrs Leonard talked to the children about the good causes the charity supports. We will let you know how much we raised as a school next week.

### **Dr Blezard's Spring Science Challenge**

Dr Blezard has shared a couple of Science activities that your children might want to tackle on a weekend or after school. Please see Weduc for further details.

### **Local History Club Visitor**

This week we were visited by Val Hinchcliffe, who opened our Railway Heritage Garden in 2018. Val worked at the Goods Station and kindly answered the questions the children had prepared about her time working at the Goods Station and life in Barnard Castle in the past. She recounted a story from her late husband about the winter of 1947, which really captured the children's interest.

### **School Meals Price Increase**

Chartwells, the school catering company Durham Local Authority schools use, have increased the cost of school meals to £2.81 per week, citing increased food costs and staff salaries as the reason for the increase, with effect from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024.

### **Sporting Events**

There are several sporting events coming up next week: Reception Multiskills on March 19th, Year 5 Multiskills on March 20th, 2 teams of Year 2 footballers on March 21st and a Girls's football tournament on March 22nd.

## Attendance

Over the past week, you may have noticed in the news further information from the government on school attendance and some worrying statistics, particularly around the number of children nationally who are classed as persistent absentees (where attendance is less than 90%). As a result, they have decreased the number of unauthorised absences allowed to 10 sessions (5 days) and periods of unauthorised absences such as these could result in a larger fixed penalty notice. This means that 5 school days holidays would fall into this bracket now so please consider this when arranging holidays for the next academic year.

Please find below this week's attendance.

Class	Attendance (%)
Reception	93.8
Year 1	100
Year 2	98.7
Year 3	96.0
Year 4	96.7
Year 5	95.4
Year 6	95.0
Whole School %	96.5

## Dates for the Diary

March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Reception Multi Skills
March 20 <sup>th</sup>	Year 5 Multiskills at Staindrop
March 21 <sup>st</sup>	2 teams from Y2 Football at Newton Aycliffe
March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Selected Y5/6 Girls Football
March 27 <sup>th</sup>	Y3/4 Orienteering
April 1 <sup>st</sup> – April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Holidays
April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Children return to school for the Summer Term
May 6 <sup>th</sup>	May Day Bank Holiday
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Children return to school
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Eco Council Visit to Cow Green
May 13 <sup>th</sup> – May 16 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 SATs
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher Training Day
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher Training Day
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	School reopens – Nursery, Reception, Y1 and 2 in new classrooms
May 27 <sup>th</sup> – May 31 <sup>st</sup>	Whit Half Term Holidays
June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Children return to school
June 10 <sup>th</sup> - June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Phonics Screening Check for Y1
June 3 <sup>rd</sup> – June 14 <sup>th</sup>	Multiplication Test for Y4

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.

