

Alston Moor Federation

Newsletter March 2023

A message from the Headteacher

Dear parents and carers,

It's very definitely the start of Spring now. I know many of our families will be extremely busy with lambing and while we at AMF appreciate the amount of hard work and sleepless nights it is lovely to see the lambs in the fields, and know that new life is here.

For all of us in school, Spring means that the exam season isn't far away. Year 10 and 11 will start their exams on 15th May, and will be working through until 21st June, with results on 24th August. Years 2 and 6 will also be sitting their SATS between 8th and 19th May. At AMF we know that these milestones are important, but we also know that children and young people can get very stressed. In this newsletter there is some good advice about supporting your child through exams. However, please don't hesitate to contact us if you feel your child needs some additional support.

This newsletter is full of information about the schools and the activities and learning the children and young people have been offered. There have been so many highlights and exciting things going on. Particular highlights have been visits from Abi Elphinstone and Professor Pumpnickel. You can also read about the important links we are forming with Cumbria Youth Alliance and Active Cumbria. Working with the schools these organisations are able to give our children and young people many additional opportunities, which I really hope our parents will support.

Next term promises to have its own excitement. We're all looking forward to the Coronation. There are very few of us in our community who have ever seen a coronation, so it certainly is something to look forward to.

I do hope all our families get a chance to rest and relax over Easter (even those lambing) and we look forward to seeing everyone again on 18th April.

With my very best wishes.
Mrs Gill Jackson



Focus on our head girl

Congratulations Chloe. We're all very proud of you.

Congratulations to our head girl, Chloe who has been selected to join North East and Cumbria Rugby Union Centre of Excellence

Chloe Brown began playing rugby when she was 12 years old at Penrith Rugby Club. Since then Chloe has developed a real love and passion for the sport and she trains multiple times per week.

This has led to Chloe not only being scouted to play for Wigan Warriors Girls Academy for Rugby League but also selected for the North East and Cumbria Rugby Union Centre for Excellence. This is a fantastic opportunity for Chloe and on the Rugby development pathway only two steps away from playing for England. We at Alston Moor Federation are very proud of Chloe and we look forward to one day watching her play for the Red Roses.



Focus on successful SKS students

This edition we're saying hello to Maeve Hanley

Maeve left us in 2006. She is currently working as a GP in Salford as well as teaching medical students at the University of Manchester. She's just started training as a Forensic Medical Examiner (to support people who have gone through a sexual assault).

At GCSE, Maeve got 3 A* grades and 3 A grades. She says "SKS was really fantastic at supporting me pursue different interests at GCSE. I was able to do Spanish GCSE, for example.

Maeve left SKS to do her sixth form studying at Haydon Bridge High School where she achieved A grades across the board, before being accepted into Medical School at Manchester University.

At SKS we're very pleased to learn more about Maeve's amazing career since she left us, and congratulate her on all she has achieved.



Focus on our partnership with Active Cumbria and Opening School Facilities



We are thrilled to be working in partnership with Active Cumbria and Opening School Facilities. This work has allowed us to buy new equipment and bring in instructors to enhance the afterschool provision. We have a range of activities on offer for students to sign up to. We encourage all students to get involved in a minimum of 1 after school club as we feel it not only benefits their physical health but it also supports their emotional wellbeing.

We will continue to add to this programme and look to parents to give their child a nudge to say yes to new opportunities. All activities are free and can be signed up for by our students or by contacting the office.



Focus on our partnership with Cumbria Youth Alliance

Our students met with the Cumbria Youth Alliance team this month to develop ideas promoting youth groups in Alston. The students attended brain storming sessions where the possibilities of these groups was explored. Mood boards were created to express the ideas of the students and then presented to the Youth Alliance team. Students then voted for their favourite idea which is a rave / youth club. The students will meet again at Carlisle racecourse to discuss further ideas with Youth Alliance.



Learning News at SKS

Focus on Careers

For the first year we have been able to host our own Careers Fair in school for year 9, 10 and 11 students. Parents were also invited to attend allowing them a chance to speak to post 16 providers and employers to see what they have on offer.

We were thrilled with the range of providers that attended including local sixth forms, colleges, specialist agricultural colleges, Cumbria apprenticeship team, the army and NHS to name a few. This ensured our students could explore all pathways of further study along with informative discussions with employment sectors.

The students enjoyed working their way around all the stalls and came away with lots to think about. Many thanks to Maria Appleton from Inspira, Jo Tate from the careers and enterprise hub, Sharon Brook our Enterprise Advisor and Jim McCarry our Careers Governor who all work hard to support us to offer a varied and enriched careers curriculum in school.

Focus on supporting your child with their exams

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD THROUGH THEIR GCSES

GCSE examinations can be a worrying prospect for your child and they will be under a great deal of pressure with deadlines and examination preparation. Here's how you can help.

POSITIVE START TO THE DAY

The beginning of the school day can be a rush for everyone. Here are some tips for a routine in the morning and evening to help the day start smoothly and with minimum stress.

The night before

Encourage your child to pack their school bag and lay out their uniform before going to bed each evening. Check for letters home, permission forms or homework diaries to sign as this will help avoid early morning panic and items being forgotten.

Breakfast

Try to make sure your child eats breakfast. This provides essential energy and will help him or her perform better at school.

Don't rush

Allow plenty of time for your child to get to school - build extra time into your morning routine so that if there are transport or other problems, he or she won't be late for registration.

ENSURE YOU ARE KEPT INFORMED

Signing up to the schools Facebook, Twitter, text and email communications can ensure you have a better understanding of what's actually going on in school and what teachers are communicating to both students and parents.

PROVIDING ALL-ROUND SUPPORT

The best way to support your child during this stressful time is to make home life as calm and pleasant as possible. Try not to nag or make too many demands. Arguments are counterproductive and will only add unnecessary stress. Make sure there are plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and try to provide good, nutritious food at regular intervals. Encourage your child to join family meals, even if it's a busy revision day - it's important to have a change of scene and get away from the books and computer for a while. Also encourage your child to take regular exercise to help clear the mind.



HOMEWORK

Homework can often feel like a chore, and there are a million things your child would rather be doing! However, in years 10 and 11 your child should aim to do from 90 to 150 minutes of homework per day. Though this work is done independently, your interest and input is still important and helps your child to do well. Ask your child if there's anything you can do to help with homework. Discuss the organisation of the work. If your child has several assignments due on the same day, suggest they space the work out rather than leave it all until the night before.

Set up the perfect study space

Provide somewhere that's well lit, not too hot or cold, with enough space for all their materials and without distractions.

Choose the best time to work

Will they get their homework done better and faster if they do it right after school? Pick the best time and help them stick to it.

No homework right before bed

Doing homework right before bed can stress them out and mess with their sleep patterns. Help them get it done earlier and enjoy their rest.

Start with the most difficult

Starting with the biggest or most difficult and then moving on to the easiest parts will make it seem much less of a chore.

Plan ahead

If they have a large project coming up help them work out realistically how long it is going to take and schedule when it can be done to avoid last minute panic.

REVISION

The secret to doing well in exams lies in planning. You can help your child to create a clear revision plan and method of studying that will make them feel in control of their work.

- ✓ Work out a revision timetable for each subject
- ✓ Break revision time into small chunks - hour-long sessions with short breaks at the end of each session often work well
- ✓ Condense notes onto postcards to act as revision prompts
- ✓ Buy new stationery, highlighters and pens to make revision more interesting
- ✓ Go through school notes with your child or listen while they revise a topic
- ✓ Time your child's attempts at practice papers

THE DAY OF THE EXAM

It's important to get a good night's sleep before an exam, so discourage your child from staying up late to cram. Make sure he or she eats a good breakfast on the morning of the exam and get them there with plenty of time. Reassure them that although you want them to do well no matter what happens you are very proud of them.

7 top tips to boost your GCSE revision



Take regular breaks to give your mind a rest!



Set boundaries for yourself



Make a timetable to track your progress



Be patient, revision takes time and practice



Find your unique revision language



Don't let revision take over your life



Remember, it's okay not to be okay

Focus on Trips and Visits

The majority of year 9 students were treated to a residential trip to York at the end of this term. These lucky students were accompanied by Mr Fletcher and Mrs Chapman who took it upon themselves to make it one of the most memorable and enjoyable experiences of their time at school.

The journey down to York was surprisingly uneventful, bearing

in mind that Mr Fletcher was driving the minibus! We arrived in good time after a short stop off at the local Morrisons to buy 'snacks', something that Mr Fletcher and Mrs Chapman would later come to regret at about midnight!!

On arriving at the hostel, we were guided through the historic streets of York allowing time for students to carry out a bit of retail therapy and stretch their legs we then visited the Jorvic Viking Centre. Students really enjoyed the



Viking Centre as they got to have a sit down, however, they didn't enjoy the rather realistic smell of the privy! As well as this they were split into 2 teams and given a treasure hunt to complete which took them through most of the city to familiarise themselves with it and explore. By the time they returned there was a clear winner as one team had 4 correct answers and the other 14. The evening was spent playing 'old school' games such as musical



chairs and musical statues, this was great fun and it was lovely to see everyone laughing and taking part in the games.

After a long and fairly noisy night, at least for me, less so for Mrs Chapman, students were rudely awakened for breakfast at 7.30. We then walked into town again to visit York Minster which was very impressive with its' ornate stonework and imposing towers, the biggest of which we all decided to climb to the top of. Everyone managed to scale the 275 stone spiral staircase steps whilst some people moaned with every step, others bravely soldiered on. At the top the view was amazing particularly as the weather was perfect so we could see for miles in every direction.

Focus on Trips and Visits

Our last event on this day was a visit to York Dungeons. Almost every student found this absolutely terrifying, whereas Mr Fletcher and Mrs Chapman found the whole experience hilarious, the reaction of the students was brilliant, we had hiding, shrieking, pushing people in front of themselves and jumping out of their skin. Both Mr Fletcher and Mrs Chapman were picked on mercilessly by the actors which the students fully appreciated and encouraged. After returning to the hostel all members of the group took part in a hotly contended pool tournament. So hotly contended was it that VAR was called in to adjudicate at some points. Mr Fletcher was rightly crowned pool king after wiping the floor with all participants.

On the final day we were entertained by playing more silly team building games where some students really excelled in leadership, direction, problem solving and pretending to be farm animals. Leaving the hostel at 12.30ish we made good time in returning to Alston which was again uneventful (except for Mr Fletcher reversing into the school building whilst trying to park, but we won't mention that).

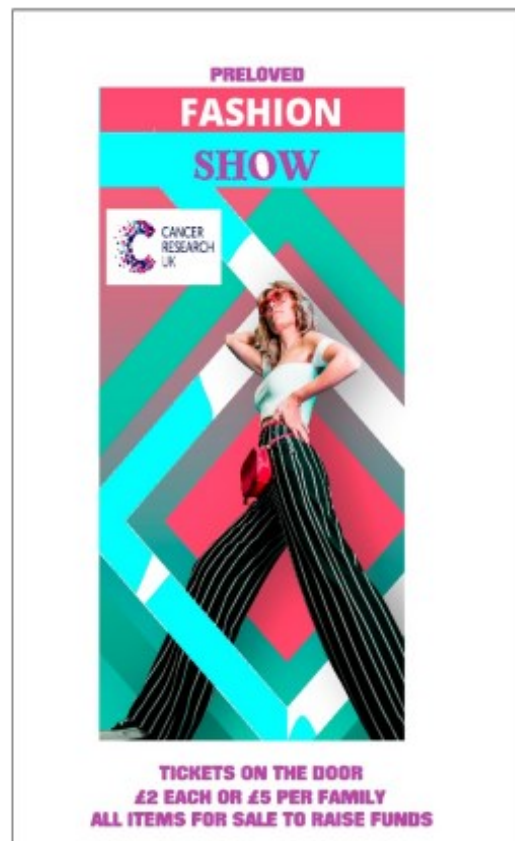
Thank you to all year 9 students for making it a superb trip, to all those who helped organised it and to all staff still at school for covering our lessons whilst we he had fun.



Focus on our Fashion Show

Calling all fashionistas. We are very excited to be hosting a fashion show of pre-loved clothing at SKS . This is in aid of one of our chosen charities, **Cancer Research**. There are many ways you can help the catwalk get off the ground and support this important cause. You can donate clothing, hats or accessories / shoes to the school for students to customise. The wackier the better. We will host creative workshops that inspire our students to be eco-friendly, reusing clothing and to express their creativity. We are inviting you to attend our fashion show and maybe buy one of our catwalk creations. Refreshments will be on sale.

Tickets can be purchased on the door for £2 each or £5 per family.



Save the date -

22nd May 6pm-8pm

Focus on Bikeability

We have been able to offer a Level 3 Bikeability course to our Key Stage 3 students this term allowing students to gain knowledge and skills on the road that aims to keep them safe. We are proud to say that all students who signed up passed.

The instructors were really pleased by the students' behaviour and conduct whilst out on assessment, we are very proud of them.



Our students have been learning

- **How to use the best riding position** for any situation
- **How to ride alongside** other cyclists
- **How to ride on more complex roads.** This might include busier roads, more complicated junctions or faster roads with speed limits above 30mph.
- **How to negotiate more complex roads.** For example, junctions controlled by traffic lights, multi-lane roads or cycle lanes.

Learning news at SKS Focus on English

This half term has involved a wonderful celebration of reading in the Federation. In SKS we celebrated World Book Day with 'Gift a Book' where staff chose books they thought students would like. Each book was individually wrapped and given to students on the day.



Here is what our pupils said about the day:

"My book has deep meaning about love and freedom"
Leonie Boyle Y10

"Brilliant"
Tilly Gough Y8

"I thought it was heart warming and thoughtful"
Sophie McAneney Y11

"It lightened up my day. I got a football book about Pele"
Ethan Fontana Y9

"I understand why I got my book because it's about fighting for what is right and I think I'm like that"
Jazmine Hopper Y11

"I felt touched when I received my Jamie Oliver cookbook"
Charlie Henderson Y11

"I got a book about King Edward which is what we're doing in History next week"
Ryan Sleightholme Y10

"When people get given books they get more time to read and they have more time to enjoy it"
Matthew McGee Y7

"I like my car book because it's interesting and it hasn't got too many hard words in it"
Dylan Henderson Y9

Learning news at SKS Focus on English

In March we had the pleasure of hosting a children's author, Abi Elphinstone who spoke passionately about her books. Abi's books are often about 'the wild', animals and fairy tales. We look forward to hearing what the year 7 pupils think about her latest book 'Sky Song'. We also had a visit from Claire at Cogito Books who brought her latest recommended reads for year 7 and 8s. Thank you to Claire for listening to the pupil's interests and giving us her time.



Year 7 and 8 have visited Alston library where they have registered for a library card and borrowed/returned books. We will continue to visit the library each half term. It is great to make the most of our local community links and continue to promote reading for pleasure.



Learning news at SKS Focus on MFL



In Languages we are into the second half term of our topics – as part of the Freetime unit, Year 7 are now looking at Media and Technology in German. Year 8 are studying French and are covering Holidays, which is a huge topic area. This half term they've been looking specifically at holiday accommodation – booking hotels and making complaints about accommodation. Year 9 are working through the My Environment topic where they've recently been working on creating a leaflet about their area in French, aimed at tourists, saying what there is to do and see.

As always, when a major festival or celebration comes up, we look at this in languages, so all of KS3 will look at Easter, both in their language studied and from a cultural view. For example, Year 7 will look at the German words for Easter vocabulary, whilst also learning about how people celebrate Easter in Germany, what traditions they may have, what they eat etc.

After Easter the language each student is learning will change, so Year 7 will go back to French while Year 8 and 9 will once again study German. This will continue to alternate in their next academic year.

Topics for the new term are as follows:

Year 7 **My Environment** (*French*), looking at describing your house, bedroom, town.

Year 8 **School and Future Plans** (*German*), which covers school subjects, describing the school and teachers, school uniform, giving opinions, jobs and the future tense.

Year 9 **Holidays** (*German*), covering countries, transport, the weather, holiday activities, food, the past tense.

We are fortunate to have several laptop trolleys around the school now, one of which is located in the MFL classroom. They provide opportunities for researching the country the students are studying, and can be used for language games too!

Speaking of language games, as a school we subscribe to a site called Linguascope, which is great for practising new vocabulary. It has sections for primary and secondary students and can be accessed from home. The games are a great way of making language learning fun, whilst embedding vocabulary.



Learning news at SKS

Focus on PE visit

Women's 6 Nations – England V Scotland at Kingston Park

On Saturday 25th March a group of our students made their way to Kingston Park to watch the opening match of the 6 Nations between England and Scotland. This was also the retirement match of England Captain Sarah Hunter who is the most capped player for England with 141 caps. Sarah has been a trail blazer for England Rugby and this was a momentous occasion for our students to witness with her retiring in front of a home crowd, the atmosphere was fantastic.

The game was thrilling and in our position behind the posts we were close to a lot of the action. The students thoroughly enjoyed the match which England won 58-7. There were 11 tries overall and plenty of action in between the students really enjoyed it and in the words of one of them 'We couldn't have picked a better match to come to'. The students are already looking forward to which match we go and see next year.



Learning news at SKS Focus on Art and Design technology



During this term KS4 DT and Art students continue in their preparation in completing their GCSE's. The Art students have continued to work on their Art exam preparation moving on from artist analysis to now developing their own ideas that will result in a final piece or pieces. The 10 hour art exam will take place after the Easter break.

The DT students are close to completing their coursework. The first final draft has been handed in and students have a prompt deadline after Easter. They will be focusing on preparing for their written exam



The year 8 art students took part in an educational visit to the Bowes museum. This visit allowed the students to continue with experimental printing. They were introduced to reverse mono printing. The students had a great day out viewing the textiles and archive galleries for inspiration before completing a printing workshop.

Year 7 DT students have continued to develop their skills in the workshop painting and putting together their block calendars. Year 8 DT students are completing their bookends, learning about wooden joints and cutting these out in the workshop using hand tools.



Learning news at SKS

Focus on RPE

RPE students focus on one religion per year, alongside looking at different ethical and philosophical topics.



To finish off their topic of Islam, Year 8s were taken to Carlisle Islamic Centre which serves as a mosque for practising Muslims in Carlisle. From the outside the students weren't sure we had come to the right place, however once they went inside they saw this wasn't what they were expecting.

We were greeted by the local Imam who explained why Muslims choose to fast, pray and give to

charity; and the reason behind the decisions he makes.

Students were able to ask any questions they had, as well as looking at the features of the Centre. One thing we found very interesting was the design of the carpet: it's straight lines mean everyone stands side by side to pray (no matter who they are), meaning that everyone is equal and should be treated with an equal respect.

This is very different to what we might experience in our lives.

The trip was very useful in helping students to understand Islam more - especially because we were able to ask whatever questions we had.

A big thank you to Carlisle Islamic Centre for having us and for being so accommodating.



Learning new; at SKS

Focus; on Food technology



Congratulations to our GCSE students who completed their final practical this half term. Their brief was to plan three or four dishes of their choice based on North and South American cuisine.

The students worked extremely hard in planning, trialling and executing their dishes; and I was very impressed with the maturity and teamwork they displayed throughout the process. Their final practical was an intense three hours (plus washing up)- the last 30 minutes felt like a scene from The Great British Bake off, but the results looked fantastic and tasted delicious.



The GCSE practical is based on showcasing various cookery skills which we practice throughout Key Stage 3. This term Year 8 have been practising skill 10: making and shaping (pastry) dough by completing a double practical session in which they firstly made their dough and then shaped it into croissants and cinnamon rolls

Learning news at AMF Focus on Abi Elphinstone

We were so excited to host a fabulous visit from Abi Elphinstone. Abi is a prolific and popular writer of books full of magic. She is one of the UK's top authors and she visited us at AMF!



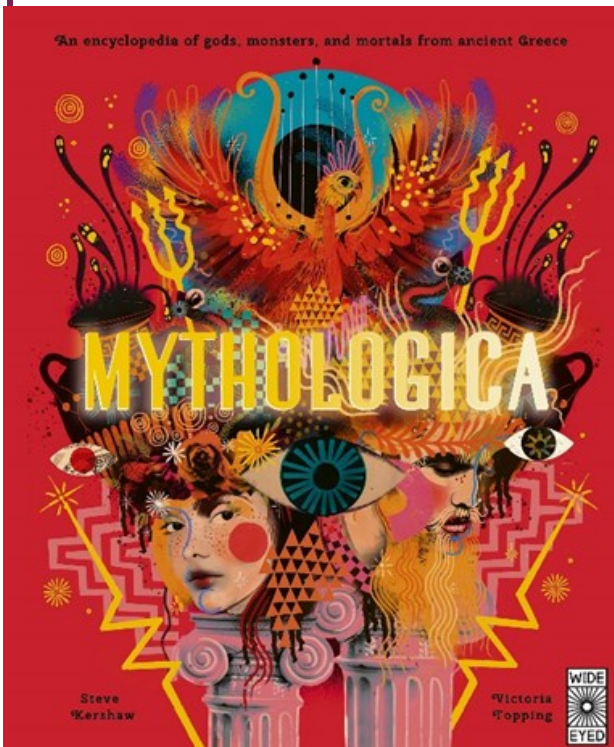
She talked to our children from years 3-8. She told us how she gets her ideas, and encouraged us to take our imaginations to all sorts of new places. She played a game with us of "imagine if...". So, you take a very ordinary object and "imagine if ...". Try it with a spoon, a key, a feather, or anything that you have lying around. Our children were amazingly inventive.

Abi invited the children to send her some of their work, and Flinty Fell rose to the

challenge, producing some amazing pieces of writing. Abi very generously sent her feedback, and the children's work, with Abi's comments, are currently on display in the window of Cogito Books in Hexham. Do go and have a look if you are in Hexham—you will be amazed!



Learning news at NP



Uncover the colourful lives of 50 powerful gods and goddesses, earth-dwelling mortals and terrifying monsters as you journey back in time to ancient Greece. From the fearless Athena and her meddling ways to the brave and bold Odysseus and his remarkable journey home, discover why these incredible stories are still a part of our culture today.

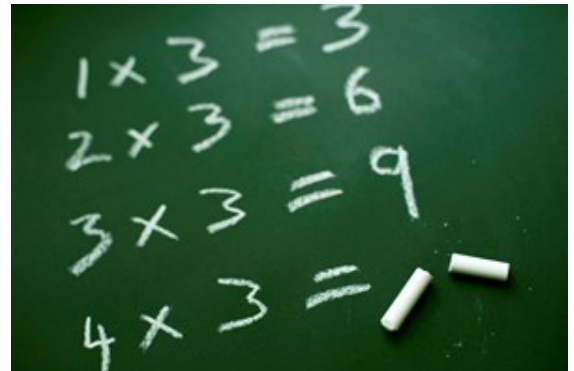
We used this book as stimulus for non-chronological report writing and some very powerful persuasive speeches addressed to Zeus. The children pitched to the man himself on why their monster would be best to undertake his next mission. It is safe to say I would not want to be a mortal facing these.

Times Tables Champions

Every week in KS2, we have the 144 calculation challenge. How fast do you think you could complete this?

The children try to beat their own previous score

Our current record is held by Noah who has got down to 3 mins and 32 secs.



Our clubs remain as popular as ever, running on Monday and Friday evenings and Wednesday mornings. Next term we have homework club on a Monday and Friday will change to board games. One for our scrabble and chess enthusiasts.

Learning news at NPJ



GRAND DAY OUT: Nenthead School teacher June Venus, governor Martyn Worrall and Year 6 pupils Philippa Higgs and Ayla MacClelland with Dr Neil Hudson, MP for Penrith and the Border.

Nenthead pupils quiz MP during trip to Parliament

NENTHEAD Primary School's two Year 6 students quizzed their local MP, Dr Neil Hudson, in the Houses of Parliament on Budget day.

The Penrith and The Border MP took time out of his busy schedule to meet with the youngsters who were on a week-long school trip to London, sampling what the city has to offer. The pair — accompanied by a teacher and governor — toured the Palace of Westminster before meeting with their MP in the prestigious Westminster Hall to put their thoughtful questions to him.

The children asked Dr Hudson a host of questions ranging from what local government reorganisation will mean to them, to what is the Budget and how is it set out. Dr Hudson shared his insight, as well as an anecdotes about Parliament.

June Venus, the Nenthead Primary School teacher leading the trip, said: "The visit to the Houses of Parliament was a crucial part of our visit to London as it gave meaning and depth of learning to our classroom work.

"Pupils have been investigating democracy linked to a project on the ancient Greeks. The visit enhanced their understanding of timelines and the development of citizenship and how our government works. Our thanks go to our excellent tour guide

and Dr Hudson for giving up his time on such a busy day.

The pupils also visited the Natural History Museum, the British Museum and Westminster Abbey but, as they are both budding artists, they particularly enjoyed Tate Britain and an immersive David Hockney experience at the Lightroom Show space. *The Lion King*, the London Eye and eating out at Lebanese, Chinese and fusion restaurants also went down well!

Dr Hudson said: "It was a joy to answer some really thoughtful and considered questions from our brilliant Nenthead youngsters. Making sure the next generations are engaged with our political system and excited about seeing it is so important to our nation as a whole.

"I'm really passionate that youngsters, no matter how remote their schools are, should have proper access to the Mother of Parliaments and enhance their education by accessing all of our great public institutions. I had the pleasure of visiting Nenthead Primary School last July and I look forward to meeting with Alston Moor youngsters again soon."

Culgaith Church of England School and Morland Area Church of England School pupils have also visited the MP in Parliament.

The year 6 children had the most amazing experience in London with Mrs Venus and Mr Worrall.

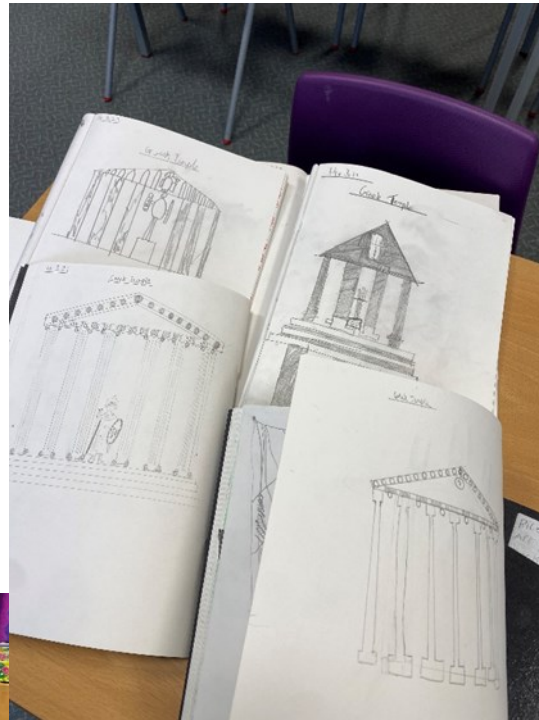
What a wonderful write up!

Learning new at NP

In art and D/T we are recreating our own temples, based on our knowledge of the Parthenon. We sketched and created prototypes before embarking on our own versions.

We used our sculpturing skills to create a base and a statue and then woodworking including accurate measuring to add pillars. Watch out for the products.

measuring
finished



Learning news at NP

We have also been exploring the weather in Nenthead, which has included looking for shadows, measuring rainfall, doing a weather forecast and of course fun in the snow!

This has also linked into our Art where we have looked at many artists such as Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Claude Monet and Stanley Spencer. We have looked at artwork from these artist representing different seasons and used a variety of techniques to recreate their work.

We have also enjoyed our annual trip to the Dodsworth's farm to see their newborn lambs and other pets. Some of the lambs were only a few hours old! Of course we got to see the famous Mr Glaves again. Always an honour.

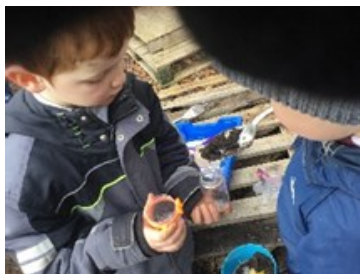


Learning news at APS

Park Fell Highlights



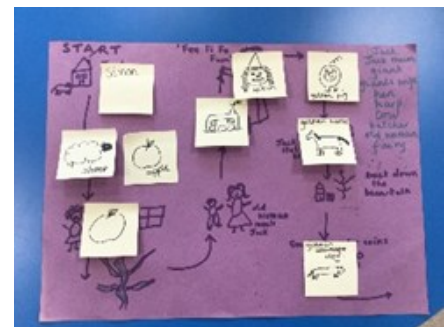
It has been a short half term, but we have packed a lot in. Our topic is **'I wonder how things grow'**. As part of this children have planted beans in bags, watched caterpillars change into butterflies and looked at life cycles of humans, flowers, and frogs. Children have made observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes. We are excited to see new born lambs when we visit a farm after Easter.



We have spent time looking at how our Forest School area changes when things start to grow. Working together to plant flowers and hunt for worms. The children's vocabulary on the subject is expanding through these practical activities.



In Literacy we have used Jack and the Beanstalk and Yucky Worms to aid our learning, adapting the story and using non-fiction texts to extend out learning. We even had a beanstalk grow in our outdoor area!



Children have learnt the importance for good health of physical exercise, a healthy diet, sleep and talked about ways to keep healthy and safe. PE with NUFC have focused on negotiating space successfully when playing racing or chasing games, adjusting speed or changing direction to avoid obstacles.



Learning news at APS

Park Fell Highlights



In Maths children have built on the mathematical knowledge learnt so far and embedded a deepened understanding of 0–10. Using a variety of games to recognise numerals and compose amounts, recognising more, fewer, one more and one less.



We celebrated World Book Day making props from their favourite book, baking cakes and choosing a book from our sharing book box. Gordon brought his book bus and we enjoyed listening to his story before choosing a book each to share in class.



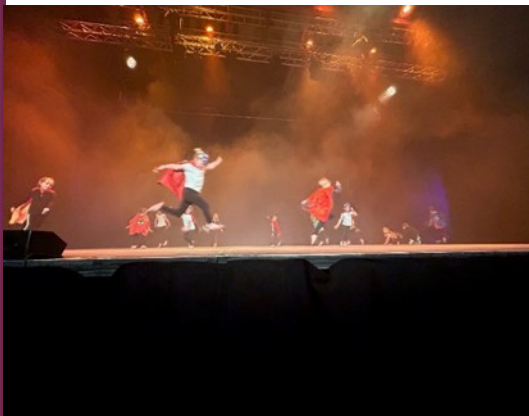
We LOVED watching Professor Pumpernickel and his science show. He was very funny and we enjoyed his experiments, especially making custard powder catch fire. Thank you to Alston Gala Committee for suggesting and their contribution towards the show!



Learning news at APS

Cross Fell Highlights

As the Spring Term draws to a close we have been looking back at all of our learning over this extremely busy half term and celebrating our achievements.



U Dance

Cross Fell were extremely fortunate to be invited to take part in the U Dance Festival alongside a host of other local Primary and Secondary schools.

Held at the Sands Centre in Carlisle we performed on the big stage in front of a packed crowd ending our performance with a huge cheer and resounding round of applause. It was such an amazing opportunity to be able to perform

alongside other schools from across Cumbria in a professional venue- it certainly was a night to remember for all of the children taking part.



World Book Day celebrations in Cross Fell



We celebrate and share our love for reading everyday in Cross Fell but World Book Day gave us the opportunity to further celebrate our love for books and reading.

We enjoyed bringing in our favourite books to share with our friends (complete with props), making book marks, enjoying quizzes and competitions and discovering new books just waiting to be shared.

We rounded the day off with a visit from Claire from Cogito books in

Hexham who gifted us all a new book to take home to share with our families- a wonderful way to celebrate all things books.



Learning news at APS

Cross Fell Highlights

Science Week

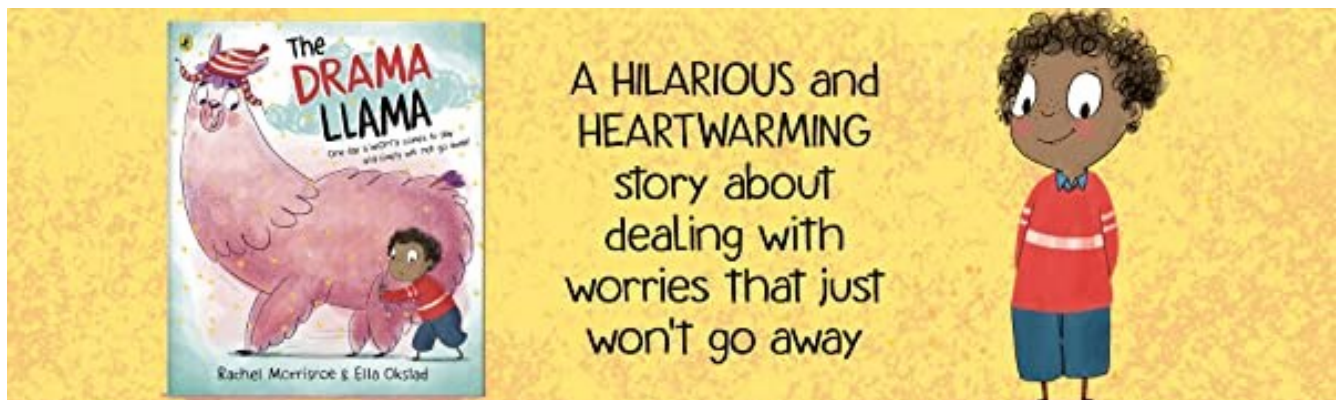
As well as enjoying a range of activities in the classroom we also marked British Science week by taking part in a workshop with the fabulous Professor Pumpernickel. He taught us about biology, chemistry and physics with a range of dazzling experiments and shared some of the amazing scientists and their discoveries who have shaped our daily lives. It was wonderful to see the children so immersed and it has certainly helped to enhance our learning back in the classroom. A huge thank you to Alston Gala Committee whose generous donation helped to make this possible for us.



Virtual Author visit

We were extremely excited to take part in a virtual author visit with Rachel Morrisroe who shared with us her new book *Drama Llama* a really engaging book that gives advice about how to deal with worries that won't go away.

We enjoyed listening to Rachel reading her story and showing us how to draw some of the pictures from the book. Cross Fell were very fortunate to be chosen out of the many, many classes taking part to have their questions personally answered- really igniting our imaginations and enthusiasm for books.

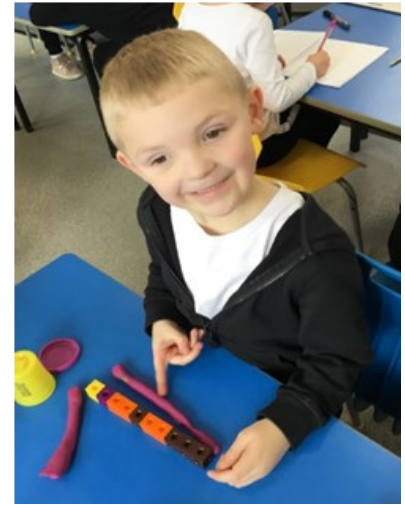


Learning news at APS

Cross Fell Highlights

Maths

In maths we have been learning all about measures this half term and have enjoyed getting to grips with length, mass and capacity. We really enjoyed using a range of practical resources to help us with our learning and have taken great delight in proving our learning by drawing pictorial representations to show our understanding. We especially enjoy it when we can write on the tables and share our maths learning with our shoulder partners!



Literacy

In Literacy we have enjoyed reading 'Where The Wild Things Are' and 'The Lonely Beast'.

We have been using both texts to inspire our writing and after story mapping have taken great pride in becoming authors writing our own beast stories inspired by the texts that we have shared.

As reflective learners we have really noticed an improvement in our writing over the past half term and have enjoyed looking back at where our writing journey began at the start of the year and how we are improving our work as we magpie ideas from the range of authors that we are taking inspiration from.



Topic

In our topic we have been finding out about national parks and game reserves in Kenya. We have researched the Maasai Mara Reserve. We have used our geography skills to create a map with a key and to show that we have included some physical features of the landscape such as swamps, mountains and rivers. We have found out about the culture of the Maasai tribe and used our creative skills to make necklaces. We found out that the tribe like to make their own entertainment in the form of dancing and singing, we really enjoyed learning a traditional jumping dance!

Learning news at APS

Cross Fell Highlights

RE

In RE we have been sharing the Easter story using drama to retell the story and think about how the different people in the story might have felt. We have thought about symbols of Easter and enjoyed taking part in a church service to draw together all of our learning for this half term.



Book recommendation



If you are looking for an alternative to Easter eggs as a gift this Easter we can recommend buying Supertato- the great eggscaper. The newest adventure in this bestselling series is an irresistibly chocolate-y caper starring Supertato and the Evil Pea! It's night-time in the supermarket and SOMEONE has stolen ALL the chocolate eggs! Never fear! Supertato and the veggies have a plan to get them back....

Cross Fell really enjoyed this story chosen during our library van visit and gave it 5 stars out of 5!

We have been really enjoying the book 'The Lonely Beast by Chris Judge' and our eagle-eyed Cross Fell children spotted that there are a range of other Lonely Beast books in this series so we are going to keep an eye out for those on our next visit to the library van- perhaps you can look out for them too and let us know if you enjoy reading them!



Learning news at APS

Middle Fell Highlights

This half-term has absolutely flown by here in Middle Fell, with everyone working particularly hard on improving our times tables fluency, handwriting and reading comprehension through our weekly practice both at school and at home. As ever, thank you all for your ongoing support with this. We remain dedicated to pursuing our personal development and have considered the key attitudes and behaviours that best support this.



In Geography, we have continued to develop our map reading skills as well as our directional knowledge, making good use of 8-pointed compasses to locate and describe key locations and geographical features. This has been particularly useful in describing the direction of travel between the UK's cities and in exploring the UK's seas and rivers. We have deepened our exploration into the variety between each county's key characteristics and have plotted these areas onto labelled maps. We are concluding this half-term by identifying some of the major geographical changes that London has undergone throughout History and why these have occurred.

During Literacy, we have studied 'The Tin Forest' as a spring board into developing our own authorial voice and selecting the appropriate authorial tone to generate our own creative stories and formal letters. As part of this, we have: consolidated our understanding of the role of prediction in our understanding of a text and have learned how to justify these using evidence; used subtle clues hidden within texts to support our own creative narratives; interpreted the potential thoughts and feelings of key characters; explored the implications of a story's setting and development; hot seated and written in role as the main character of our story; and we identified the key features of both creative narratives and formal letters before planning, drafting, editing and publishing our own writing in these two formats. Our growing independence in self-assessment has played a crucial role in achieving this within our short half-term.



Learning news at APS

Middle Fell Highlights



As part of our SPAG, we have primarily been focussing on the use of apostrophes for possession, contraction and direct speech. We have also: consolidated our categorisation of noun types into concrete/common, pro-, abstract, collective and proper nouns; applied our knowledge of expanded noun phrases to improve our writing; and began experimenting with using a wider variety of determiners.

We have been reading a range of folk tales during our reading comprehension lessons which have been written across a range of genres and subjects, blending a variety of fictional and non-fictional information. These have been centred on traditional folklore surrounding the UK's woodlands. We have read both independently and collectively before answering VIPERS to clarify and justify our understanding of key words, authorial motivation and to predict what could happen next in each tale. We continue to expand our class library to cater to pupils' interests, with our recently acquired catch-up texts successfully aiding the transition of our levelled readers to becoming independent and confident free readers.

'Length & Perimeter' and 'Fractions' were the key White Rose Maths foci of this half-term's Numeracy for both Year 3s and Year 4s, with our Owls learning about 'Money'. Our efforts in these areas have enabled us to: accurately calculate the perimeter of regular and irregular polygons as well as rectilinear shapes; measure in millimetres, centimetres, metres and kilometres; compare, add and subtract lengths; understand the role of the whole; correctly identify the denominators and numerators of a fraction; compare and order unit-fractions, non-unit fractions and equivalent fractions; understand and convert both mixed fractions and improper fractions; identify equivalent fraction families; identify and compare the differing values between common coins and notes; arrange alternative combinations of currency values to achieve an equivalent value; and calculate the change needed when paying for goods. Times tables practice has intensified for our Year 4s who are due to undergo their statutory Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) in June, but has extended to include our Year 3s to better support their upcoming transition into Year 4.

Learning news at APS

Middle Fell Highlight

Through our Science sessions, we have been taking on the role of Botanists by investigating the parts of plants and flowers, but also how they reproduce. This has involved: observing a range of different flowers before recording our observations of these in our labelled botanical illustrations; discussing the work of William Keble Martin; creating models to identify and describe the male and female reproductive parts of flowers; highlighting the role of bees and other insects in pollination including how these insects locate and communicate nectar sources; using evidence to form our own theories; conducting fair tests to record wind dispersal; classifying fruits by their similarities; and planting our own beans and radishes to observe in class. We will continue to



explore this subject in more depth next half-term.

As part of Computing, we returned to developing our programming and debugging skills using Scratch 3.0. We have: created several independent programming projects such as moving sprites through self-generated mazes; utilised programming extensions to add effects to our sprites and to draw pictures/lines; built sequences of commands to make our pre-planned designs work; debugged our code and resolved errors that occur; modified programmes using a design; matched pieces of code to their outcomes; and evaluated our projects upon completion.

For RE, we have read the Easter story and considered the implications of Jesus' actions during the Last Supper, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The morals underpinning this celebration have been scrutinised and applied to our own moral codes. We

have also considered the significance of the Easter story to Christians and how this diverges from other religions such as Judaism.

Our PSHE has continued to explore the significance of role models in our lives and the difficulties these individuals had to overcome to achieve their dreams and goals. We have also considered and recorded our own dreams and goals before considering how we can best achieve those. This has gone a long way in developing our love of reading and our attitudes towards learning.



developing our love of reading and our attitudes towards learning.

Learning news at APS

Middle Fell Highlights

In our Art sessions, we have responded to various audio stimuli with a range of materials to express our understanding of these pieces of music. In DT, we have worked in small teams to evaluate, design and build our own marble runs to meet a project brief.

During Music and Performing Arts, we have concluded our gymnastics unit and have returned to adding motion to song with Miss Alison as well as strengthening our ukulele chord skills with Miss Tuffin and Miss Harding. NUFC sessions continue to be hosted by Mr. Ballantyne with our regular PE sessions conducted by Mrs. Allinson.



Learning news at APS

Flinty Fell Highlights

In our Literacy sessions over the last half-term, we have written newspaper articles, reports, diary entries and adventure stories. The inspiration for our writing has stemmed from our WWII topic, and our new class novel 'Goodnight, Mister Tom', which has continued to be very emotive and inspiring. As always, the writing produced in Flinty Fell this term has been truly superb, and the children should be very proud of what they have produced. Meanwhile, the feedback we got from Abi Elphinstone about our fiction writing was very much appreciated. The visit from Abi on 'World Book Day 2023' was truly special, and something that we will remember for years to come. We spent several sessions working hard on constructing adventure stories that we were extremely proud of, and to receive the kind and inspiring words from Abi was very special indeed. The writing in Flinty Fell has reached new heights this term, and I am so excited to see what the children come up with next!



In our Science sessions this term we have completed our work on Electricity, which is a topic we have thoroughly enjoyed. Carrying out our investigations, as we built our own circuits using bulbs, buzzers, batteries and wires, was an extremely fun and engaging way to develop our knowledge further. Practical sessions are always



enthusiastically met by the children in Flinty, and it was super to see their inquisitive and pragmatic nature come to the forefront of their learning! Additionally, we had an exhilarating morning on Friday 24th March, watching the incredible Professor Pumpnickel! The workshop was full of experiments that helped us learn about the worlds of Chemistry, Physics and Biology, as well as providing high levels of entertainment!



Learning news at APS

Flinty Fell Highlights continued ...

During Art and DT this term, we have produced some brilliant Anderson Shelters and Lancaster Bomber planes linked to our topic on the Second World War. The children worked diligently and carefully on their designs and during the construction phase, and the results were very impressive indeed! Additionally, this term we have also produced some beautiful paintings based on 'Blitz Art' inspired from the Second World War.



Our Maths topics this term have seen us complete our work on Algebra, as well as beginning our work on our new topic 'Shape and Angles'. The way that Flinty Fell completely engrossed themselves in the world of Algebra was amazing, and they showed some real promise in this area of Mathematics. Considering this was the first time many of the children had come across Algebra, they performed at a wonderfully high level! Great job Flinty!



In singing assemblies this term, the children across the primary school have

prepared for the Easter Service that is happening on 31st March at St. Augustine's in Alston. The children

sound truly amazing, singing 'Give Me Oil In My Lamp' and 'Shine, Jesus Shine', and I know that the parents and carers that come along to the service are going to be in for a real treat!



Learning news at APS Flinty Fell Highlights continued ...



In Performing Arts, many of our children performed and excelled at the Carlisle Music and Drama Festival that took place in March. The festival was a huge success for our students in Flinty. All the performers were an absolute credit to the federation. Huge congratulations to Megan Thompson in Flinty Fell for winning the 11 and under prose speaking (out of a class of 31 competitors a real accolade), and a big well done to Jack Shepherd and Darcy Wilkin for gaining second place in the 11 and under duologue play class (out of 20 duologues most impressive)!



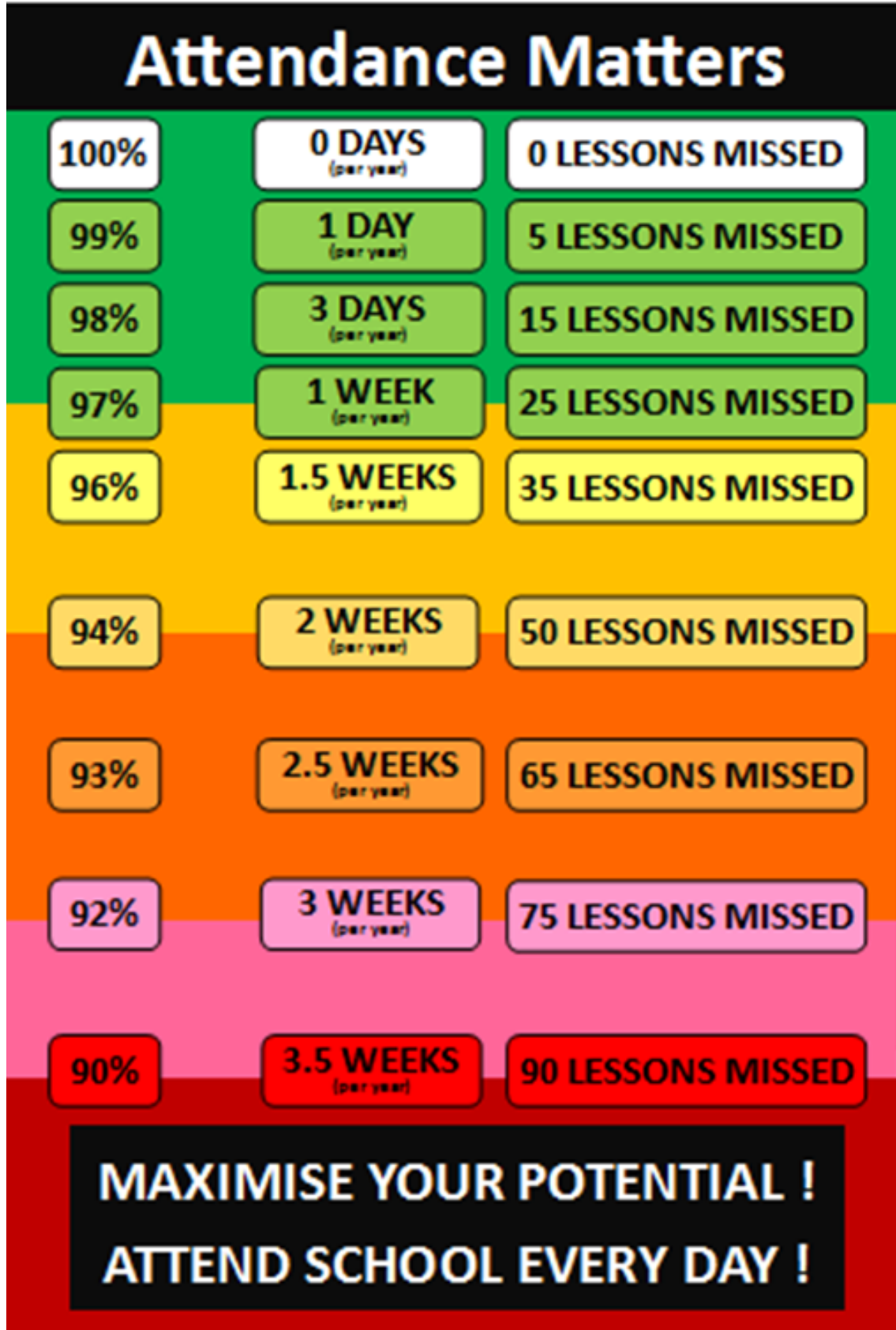
We have even found time to use the SKS catering room and made cakes for Mother's Day.



School Attendance Matters

Attendance is a high priority across Alston Moor Federation; we aim to have all students attending at 96% or better.

Just a reminder—we NEVER authorise holidays in term time. Learning time is too precious



School Attendance Matters

Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. Good attendance also shows potential employers that a young person is reliable. Arriving on time is also important to start the day off on the right foot. Attendance also promotes positive social interaction and a feeling of belonging.



We had a great time with our students at our attendance celebration event. Our students enjoyed a wide selection of cakes and hot chocolate.

The silver house cup is up for grabs. Who will be the winning house for the best attendance?

Tyne, Eden, Wear or Tees ?

 **Good attendance in school means:**
Being in school at least **97%** of the time, that's **185 to 190** days every year






Did you know?
A two week holiday in term time means the highest attendance possible is 94.7%



GCSEs may seem a long way off for you but all absence at any stage leads to gaps in your learning

Focus on Online Safety

We are all aware of the need to work together to ensure our children stay safe on line. For younger children this advice is great to share, and gives them a clear way of remembering how to look after themselves.

<h1>S</h1> <p>Stay Safe</p> <p>Don't give out your personal information to people / places you don't know.</p> 	<h1>M</h1> <p>Don't Meet Up</p> <p>Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Always check with an adult you trust.</p> 	<h1>A</h1> <p>Accepting Files</p> <p>Accepting emails, files, pictures or texts from people you don't know can cause problems.</p> 	<h1>R</h1> <p>Reliable?</p> <p>Check information before you believe it. Is the person or website telling the truth?</p> 	<h1>T</h1> <p>Tell Someone</p> <p>Tell an adult if someone or something makes you feel worried or uncomfortable.</p> <p>Follow these SMART tips to keep yourself safe online!</p> 
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SMART tips based on resources from www.thinkuknow.co.uk

For teenagers we teach them to THINK before they post anything online

BEFORE YOU POST

THINK

T – is it **TRUE**?

H – is it **HELPFUL**?

I – is it **INSPIRING**?

N – is it **NECESSARY**?

K – is it **KIND**?

Please remind your child that employers now routinely check someone's online presence before offering them a job—some stupid post can come back to haunt you many years later, and nothing is ever truly deleted online!

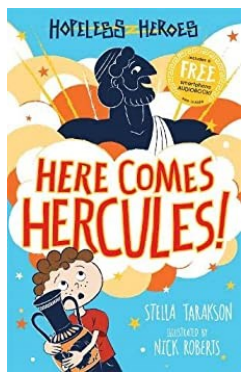
Recommended reads



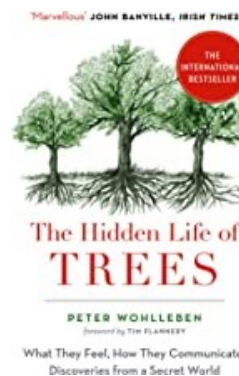
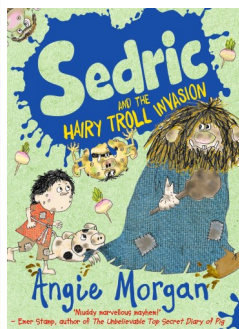
Mrs Brown says "If you are looking for an alternative to Easter eggs as a gift this Easter we can recommend buying **Supertato- the great eggscaper**. The newest adventure in this bestselling series is an irresistibly chocolate-y caper starring Supertato and the Evil Pea! It's night-time in the supermarket and SOMEONE has stolen ALL the chocolate eggs! Never fear! Supertato and the veggies have a plan to get them back....



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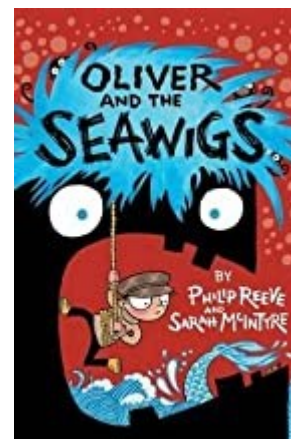
Mr Watters suggests **Sedric and the Hairy Troll Invasion** by Angie Morgan, **Here Comes Hercules** by Stella Tarakson, **Oliver and the Seawigs** by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre and **Can You Hear The Trees Talking?** by Peter Wohlleben.



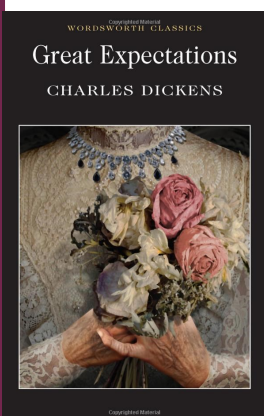
Mr Percival says that **Saving Neverland** by Abi Elphinstone and **Coming to England** by Floella Benjamin are well worth reading



Mrs Hinkley suggests our young people would enjoy Abi Elphinstone's '**Sky Song**' as it is a book packed full with vivid description and imagery. Abi Elphinstone captures your attention from the opening sentence as you follow Eska and Flint on their magical journey to force the Ice Queen back. It's a tale of magic, curses, polar bears and glaciers. In my opinion, it's a must read!



For our older readers, why not try '**Great Expectations**' by Charles Dickens, it is an absolute favourite story of mine. The story follows Pip, a Blacksmith's apprentice through this life. He comes into a large fortune from a mysterious benefactor and moves to London where he enters high society. He thinks he knows where the money has come from but is mistaken. He also adores a young woman Estella who cannot return his love. The latest BBC dramatisation stars Olivia Coleman as Miss Havisham which I am sure will be well worth a watch following reading the book!



(Remember there are always audio books, which can get your child enjoying a good story if they don't yet enjoy reading— also great for car journeys)

