



NEWSLETTER

13/2/26

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STAFF NEWS

I am pleased to announce that the school have appointed a new SENCo who will also cover the teachers' planning, preparation and assessment time (PPA). Kimberley Simpson will join us in March. Mrs Simpson is an ex-pupil of the school and taught here briefly in 2016. Since then, she has held SENCo and leadership positions at Longtown and Petteril Bank and brings with her a wealth of experience. Mrs Simpson will start initially one day a week and will join us fully at the end of March.

COMPASS PAYMENTS

It has been half a term since Compass was launched. All seems to be operating well although we do have a small number of parents who are not booking dinners or before/school after care. Unfortunately, not booking sessions or lunches causes a surprising amount of additional administration time and the school may have to look into an increased charge for those not booking in advance. As always, if there are any difficulties, do speak to Mrs Makepeace who will be happy to assist.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Next half term, Junior gymnastics will continue on Monday with Infant gymnastics on Thursdays with Miss Fleming/Miss Maclagan. Board Games will continue on Tuesdays and there will be the usual Wednesday Film Club. Friday will be Pickleball with Mr Jones – an introduction to a game similar to tennis which can be played inside or out. The school has also purchased a squash wall which may also be used to introduce another racquet sport. All these are available to book via Compass.

CHESS

There has been a buzz of excitement around school at lunchtimes this term as 32 children took part in the Delancey Chess Competition. After 7 rounds of matches with badges, bugs, lucky dip prizes and gold spots all earned, final positions were established.

1 st	Michael Sharp	21 points (7 wins, max)
2 nd	Blake Ulyart	19 points
3 rd =	Alice Dickinson	17 points
	Matilda Wilson	17 points
	Michael Grushka	17 points

We will keep lunchtime chess going one lunchtime a week on Thursdays after half term for those who want to learn or improve. This would be useful for anyone who perhaps might want to enter next year's competition.

The school will also be hosting a competition against other schools on Tuesday 10th March (St Michael's and Fellview Schools have signed up already!).

There will also be House Matches on 2nd, 9th and 16th March and House Captains will be selecting teams for after half term.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

The week started with an assembly on the theme of 'This is My Place'. Which encouraged children to think about and recognise places/groups where they feel most comfortable. Various activities have taken place including mindfulness colouring, but I must thank Marilyn Whiffin for coming into school to work with the children on yoga and breathing techniques. As I'm sure you're aware the week ended on a high with lots of laughter and amazement at the annual talent show.

READING COMPETITION AND WORLD BOOK DAY

We will be celebrating World Book Day on Friday 6th March (the day after the official World Book day) and we would like to celebrate reading in the build up to then as it is the 'National Year of Reading'

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/about-us/national-year-of-reading-2026/>

We would like the children to do an 'Extreme Read' over the next two weeks. This involves the children (and teachers!) having a photo taken of themselves in an unusual place or position; up a tree, on a slide, on a mountain, upside down – the more extreme the better! Any photos should be sent to Mrs Barratt on Classlists – these will then go on a display in the hall. If this could be done by Thursday 26th February, we will then show all the photos received in assembly on 2nd March to start the week.

During the week leading up to World Book Day, we will be organising buddy reading sessions with older children reading to the younger ones and vice versa.

There will be a story time at the end of each day and the children will be able to choose which story they want to listen to led by different teachers and teaching assistants.

For World Book Day itself we would like children to come dressed up as a word. This word can be anything: vibrant (something colourful), historic (something old) or athletic (something sporty) are all possibilities.

See <https://uk.pinterest.com/bruvz/vocabulary-parade/> for some clever ideas.

BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL

The behaviour in school has been very good this half term with very few incidents to deal with. We believe that keeping the children busy and having a simple, fair and consistent policy for behaviour helps. Occasionally, teachers and myself must deal with incidents which may require talking to children firmly, usually following an investigation into how the

incident occurred. We aim to do this as swiftly as possible and find that the children are often sorry for their actions and all parties are able to move on. Recently, some parents have questioned the way we have dealt with matters which is disappointing as we feel that we deal with matters in a fair way in order to maintain the calm and respectful atmosphere in school.

If you do have a query about the way a member of staff has dealt with any issue or if there are concerns about progress, do arrange an appointment so staff can give you their undivided attention rather than discuss matters at the start of the school day.

PTA MEETING

The PTA will hold a meeting on Monday 23rd February at 3.15pm in the Y3/4 classroom. The main purpose of the meeting will be to plan the next event which will hopefully take place before Easter.

SWIMMING

Y5/6 have completed their swimming sessions this week and it has been great to see the progress being made. Shortly after half term, there is a swimming gala where four of our swimmers will represent the school at the Sands on Tuesday 24th February.

CURLING

Curling Club has been fun and competitive this half term. Arrangements are being made for a visit to Lockerbie Ice Rink to give 'real' curling a go. Hopefully, watching the performances at the Winter Olympics will have helped.

EDEN ROCK BOULDERING COMPETITION

There will be a boys' and a girls' team going to Eden Rock on Thursday 26th February for the annual bouldering competition. Those involved in Y5/6 will have received a separate letter.

GYMNASTICS

The school have entered three teams into the Key Steps Gymnastics Competition on Friday 27th February. This will take place during the afternoon at The Sands Centre. Further information will come from Miss Fleming to those involved.

INTERNET SAFETY AND VAPE AWARENESS for Y5/6

I have arranged two talks for Y5/6 children early next half term. PCSO Graham Kirkpatrick is coming in to school on Monday 23rd February to remind children about Internet Safety. On 5th March, the children will receive a talk from CADAS about the risks and consequences associated with vaping.

FANTASY FOOTBALL

With just 10 games to go, the Cummersdale League is still quite competitive at the top. Ryan Roberts 'Magicians' lead the way, but following an inspired captain pick, Craig Whyte's 'Half a World (a) have moved into 2nd. The leading pupil's team – Bradley Leathers' 'Mo Salads' are in 3rd just 13 points from the top. The best staff member is Mr Travers' and his team 'Amad For It', but they are languishing in 11th.

HOUSE POINTS

Skiddaw, who benefitted from winning the Handwriting Competition lead the way this term with 561 points. They are followed by Blencathra (496), Cat Bells (486) and Helvellyn (436).

ATTENDANCE

Many children have struggled through this half term with colds and sickness bugs around the place. Well done to Y2 who have ended the half term with 100% attendance this week.

PUPIL OF THE WEEK

This week's **Pupil of the Week** is **Ethan Simpson (Y3)** who has recently impressed Mr Travers with his hard-working attitude and conduct in and around class.

The **Mrs Vickers Kindness Cup** goes to **Harley Mounsey (Y5)** for being encouraging and supportive to others during PE lessons.

The **Enjoy-a-ball Trophy** goes to **Jo Jo Pearson (Y6)** for making great progress with his swimming this week.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

23/2/26	New Half Term begins
23/2/26	Internet Safety Talk for Y5/6 from PCSO Kirkpatrick
23/2/26	PTA meeting (3.15pm)
24/2/26	CSSA Swimming Gala - The Sands
25/2/26	House Curling
26/2/26	Eden Rock Bouldering Competition (Y5/6)
27/2/26	Key Step Gymnastics Competition
3/2/26	Small Schools 5-a-side (Y3/4 – 2 teams) - Harraby
5/2/26	CADAS Vape Awareness Talk for Y5/6
6/3/26	House Reading Competition and World Book Day
10/3/26	RSC Chess Competition at Cummersdale (Y5/6)
10/3/26	Governors' Meeting
12/3/26	Netball Tournament (Y5/6) - Central
17/3/26	Football: Y3/4 Girls 7-a-side (Harraby)
17/3/26	Dodgeball: Y3-6 Mixed (Uni of Cumbria) <i>tbc</i>
17/3/26	AIM High Writing Day: Y3/4 (selected children)
17/3/26	A I M High Writing Day – Y3/4
18/3/26	Eden Rock Superfinal (if qualified)
18/3/26	Football: v Belle Vue (3.30pm); Rob Ferg (4.10pm) - Harraby
20/3/26	Y1/2 Class Assembly
21/3/26	School Visit to Carlisle United v Boston United
23/3/26	Feet First Challenge
23/3/26	Austin Friars Hockey <i>tbc</i>
27/3/26	End of Term

More dates will be added as the term goes on and once confirmed