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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the second half of this term and to spring itself – let's hope the winter weather is behind us as we hurtle towards Easter.

I must say huge congratulations to Mrs Atkinson who has achieved a National Professional Qualification for Leading Literacy (NPQLL) which has taken over a year to complete. This is an intense course which allows participants to develop the knowledge, skills and expertise to lead literacy across school. It seems a long time since I completed my NPQH - National Professional Qualification for Headship (it took over two years to complete) - but these are just two of the many opportunities, training courses and professional qualifications that staff here at Hipsburn have completed over the years. We are always keen to develop our skills and qualifications and even during lockdown we became members of the National College and have remained with the college since then as it provides a huge range of online courses that we use on a regular basis.

On our next training day many of our staff will be completing their First Aid Training that has to be updated every three years and in the autumn term some of our staff will be completing RWInc training. Going forwards, Mrs Johnson is training to be a Forest Schools Leader which will enhance our outdoor provision even further.

It is reassuring to know that we support our staff at the very beginning of their teaching careers

as well as those who are already more experienced teachers. Last term, we were visited by representatives from The Three Rivers Trust (based in Morpeth) who were assessing how we support teachers at the very beginning of their career. These are known as ECTs - Early Career Teachers. Here are two quotes from their report:

Provision for ECTs at Hipsburn Primary is absolutely fantastic - there is a clear commitment to the ECF programme and this is used brilliantly to develop the quality of teaching to a high standard.

I am able to see that Hipsburn could be viewed as a school of excellence for ECT provision - I would be happy to recommend your Induction Lead to work with us in supporting the Teaching School Hub with training other mentors or ECTs.

Naturally, a strong commitment to the continuous professional development of our staff ensures that we are always striving to be the best at what we do and this in turn improves the quality of the educational provision for all our children enabling them to reach their full potential.

Whilst this is quite a short half term it is as busy as the rest of the year so please check your emails regularly and the school calendar for events coming up.

Have a great half term!
Kevin Moloney, Headteacher

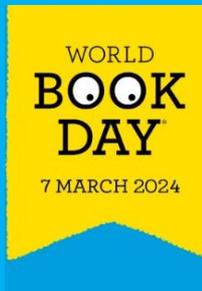
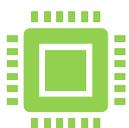
Some Upcoming Events

- ◆ Clubs this half term:
Mondays, Trident Soccer, All Breakfast Club, Every Day, All Tues/Weds Homework, All Tuesdays, Drawing, Yrs 4-5 Tuesdays, SATs, Yr 6 Weds, Guitar, Yrs 3-6 Thurs, Easter Crafts, Yrs 1-2
- ◆ Preschool Stay & Play
Monday 4th March, 9.00-10.30am
- ◆ Football at DCHS, yrs 3/4 girls
Wednesday 6th March
- ◆ World Book Day
Thursday 7th March
- ◆ Parent Teacher Meetings
Mon 11th & Weds 13th March
- ◆ Year 6 PE Event at DCHS
Tuesday 12th March
- ◆ Etal Lego League Challenge
Thursday 14th March
- ◆ Red Nose Day
Friday 15th March (wear red!)
- ◆ Alnwick Beach Day
Friday 15th March
- ◆ Dunstanburgh Beach Day
Monday 18th March
- ◆ Ford Beach Day
Friday 22nd March
- ◆ Dukeshouse Wood instalment due by
Monday, 25th March
- ◆ Preschool Outdoor Day
Tuesday 26th March
- ◆ Etal Beach Day
Wednesday 27th March
- ◆ Dunstanburgh Class Assembly - parents welcome
Wednesday, 27th March, 9.15-9.45am
- ◆ Break up for Easter
Thursday 28th March
- ◆ Back to school
Monday 15th April

Please keep checking the calendar on the school website for more events

Smart tech...

Ford class were busy researching and designing smart wearables last half term as part of a D&T project. Each child designed and created an eCharm to enable them to be seen in the dark. They used foam sheets and stickers to create their eCharm pouch and Microbit computer software to create a flashing light for the inside.



Thursday 7th March is World Book Day and we will be celebrating in school with lots of wonderful book-related activities!

There will be virtual author events and a book exchange where pupils can bring in a much loved book and exchange it for another.

The day also sees the greatly anticipated return of *Design a Potato Book Character*. Get creative and turn a humble spud into one of your favourite book characters. Please ensure all potato entries are brought into school by **Wednesday 6th March** for judging. There will be a winner selected from each year group. If previous years are anything to go by, the judges will have their work cut out!



Red Nose Day is back on **Friday 15th March!**

Red is the colour and pupils are invited to come in non-uniform and wear something red for this great charity. Please note we don't accept cash in school, but you can donate via our dedicated ParentPay link:

[Donate now](#)



A reminder that we have a small number of pupils in school with severe nut allergies. Exposure to nuts and nut products can cause a rapid and serious reaction for these individuals. We ask for your co-operation in not sending any nut product in to school, either as a snack or in packed lunches. Thank you.

Dragons and dinosaurs...



In early years, our last half term was filled with lots of dinosaur adventures. Alnwick Class were so excited to invite families in to show them a snapshot of their learning as they performed an assembly. They really did 'wow' everyone with their facts and skills across the curriculum. Children in preschool had great fun being mini palaeontologists, discovering bones and fossils in sand and hatching their very own dinosaur egg.



As well as our dinosaur learning in art we learnt how to make a wax resistant picture and use a water colour paint wash to make background as part of our paleoart. We continued our skills with NUFC and in addition we celebrated Chinese New Year. We found out about traditions, the culture and had fun embracing a bit of Chinese Creativity. Another highlight was having our own Chinese New Year which involved Dragon dancing and having a feast, we even got our fortune cookies.



Preschool also loved getting messy with their dinosaurs in their very own home-made mud and had an exciting dino hunt in their forest.





Preschool were super busy making lanterns and paper chains for their Chinese New Year celebrations - all topped off with a great dragon parade!



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In preschool we read a wonderful story called 'Lanterns and Firecrackers': It is a simple and delightful introduction to the festival of Chinese New Year for children.

The story follows a family as they let off firecrackers, watch lion and dragon dances and hang up lanterns to celebrate the start of their New Year.

We decorated our classroom with paper chains and lanterns which we created ourselves and made a large scale Dragon for a special dance.

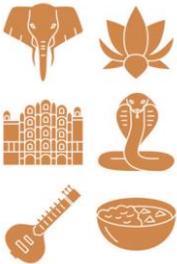




Did you know?

Om is a symbol representing a sacred sound, syllable, mantra and an invocation in Hinduism? It is made up of three Sanskrit letters - aa, au and ma, which, when combined, make the sound Om. Its written representation is one of the most important symbols of Hinduism.

Etal Castle class had a brilliant day visiting the ISKCON Hindu Temple in Newcastle. After getting the train into Newcastle Central Station, we walked to the temple where we learned a lot about Hinduism, linking to our RE topic. With the chance to hear stories and ask a lot of questions, dress in saris and turbans and enjoy a traditional lunch, it was a day full of learning and fun!



Wish you were here...



Last half term was full of adventure at the beach – from building dinosaur worlds in the sand (Alnwick pics below) to looking for fossils and finding signs of spring. Here are some of our postcards from the coast..



Ford Ancient Egyptian Beach Day

What a wonderful way to end the half term with some fabulous outdoor learning on a beautiful beach day! After a bit of nature spotting on the journey to the beach it was a morning to help reflect and reinforce our half term's learning on Ancient Egypt. First we had to think carefully about the structure and engineering of the Pyramids including thoughts about why they were they built. Then we built our own in teams. This developed into deepening a better understand about life for Egyptian people by thinking, planning and building our own Egyptian homes. There was lots of great discussion and explanation showing each teams creation. Before lunch we concluded our Egyptian thinking by writing a poem or a dairy reflection and sharing it with the class.

After lunch we took to thinking about our class story 'Wild Robot' and in our teams we created our own 'mini drama' performance of a section of the story. We made a really impressive show of our chosen parts as we performed them to the class using the sand dunes as our little amphitheatre. We finished the day by creating our own islands for the story for 'Wild Robot', there was so much imagination and creativity.

Well done, Ford Castle Class.





Dunstanburgh Castle class had the most lovely beach day on 12/2/24. The weather was beautiful, blue skies and sunshine all day! On the way to the beach, we hunted for signs of spring coming such as daffodils and snowdrops growing. We also explored the many different habitats present along the walk such as wetland and woodland. We were super lucky to see a pheasant in the woodland who surprisingly came up very close to us!

Following this, we consolidated our geography knowledge about the USA and created North America and its many landmarks in the sand. In the afternoon, we walked up Bracken Hill which had the most beautiful, clear view. We drew the habitats we had seen and the view from the top of the hill. Some of the children even wrote and shared poems about the view to the class! Alongside this, we explored many different points of interest such as the St John's Church and the Battery. It was a super day.

