

NEWSLETTER

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A swan, it is said, glides gracefully over the water but under the surface it is paddling furiously. Never has this saying been more true than over the half last term here at Swansfield. The day before the start of term we were changing the staffing structure as **Miss Langman** was sadly too unwell to teach. Her condition was extremely serious however I'm pleased to tell you that after a lengthy operation and stay on hospital she is now recuperating - we send her our love and best wishes for speedy recovery. We were very fortunate to be able to ask **Mr Rose** to step into the breach and take over Ash class and recruit **Mr Carr** to work alongside **Mrs Amy Smith** in Maple, our thanks go to all of these staff for their flexibility and helping us to keep a stable staffing structure.

At the beginning of October, we had a visit from two HMI inspectors fact-finding about the impact of The COVID Pandemic on our school. They thanked us for our hard work and we are still awaiting their letter which we will share with you when it is published.

We have had to follow the risk assessment and public health procedures as the prevalence of Coronavirus has spread and we enter a new lockdown. In all

instances the measures in place have helped to protect the wider school community. We thank you for adhering to social distancing on and around the school site and supporting the mitigating procedures that we have adopted. Adults are welcome to wear face masks on site though it is not compulsory when outside, however anyone entering the school building will be asked to wear one.

I often remind myself that there are other viruses available particularly as we head into flu season and I can foresee challenges in terms of staffing as we don't have the flexibility to move staff around the school but we have to rely on staff within each phase to provide cover for absent colleagues.

Amongst all of this the children are remarkably resilient and happy in school and the best thing that we can do for everyone's well-being is to keep calm and carry on. I know that we can count on your support, thank you.

Best Wishes

Jenny Smith



Swansfield Park
Primary School



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Harvest Festival

We received a lovely letter of thanks from the **Alnwick and District Food Bank** following the donation of your harvest gifts. As always our school family gave generously to support others in our community. Our **Head Boy** and **Head Girl** helped me to make a Harvest display.

Parental Consultations

In previous years we have held the first of our mentoring meetings with parents and pupils during November. This is no longer possible due to the Coronavirus, however we want to give all parents the opportunity to have a telephone consultation with their child's class teacher.

As you will appreciate staffing within bubbles is restrictive and can also change quickly depending on circumstances. Therefore, we are going to arrange these appointments just a week in advance during this half term.

If you would like to discuss your child's progress with the class teacher, please submit the google form when it is sent to you and you will receive a telephone call during your chosen time slot. Don't worry if you miss a call as the teacher will call you back later in the session.

As we are currently in lockdown and working from home, **we have offered two time slots, 9am - 12 noon and 1pm - 4pm**. Please consider the well-being of the teachers and select one of these slots. If, however, you are still working and are only available after 6pm please let staff know and they will try to provide an evening call.

Senior Mental Health Lead

Never has it been more important to look after the mental health of our children, our staff and our parents than now. Well-being is one the key strands in our strategic plan with the intended outcome being that

“All members of our school community are physically, socially and emotionally resilient.”

In line with **Well-Being for Education** which is part of the **Every Minds Matters initiative** we have appointed **Mrs Michelle Smith** as our Senior Mental Health Lead.

We are introducing the children to the **Charlie Waller Trust's Five Ways to Well-being** in assembly starting with **Giving to Others**.

The **Charlie Waller Trust** website provides a wealth of useful information for parents and carers. They offer resources about children and young people's mental health as well as information on parent support groups.

<https://charliewaller.org/>



CONNECT

connect with people you know: family, friends and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships.



BE ACTIVE

take a walk, jog or cycle or find another activity that you enjoy.



KEEP LEARNING

learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and increased confidence.



GIVE TO OTHERS

even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank-you or a kind word.



TAKE NOTICE

be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Giving' can be the smallest act such as a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Time to talk is another thing that is so important to give, particularly now. Talking might not get rid of our worries but it can certainly help us feel better and make us realise that other people have worries too and that we are not alone. As well as online resources, there are many children's books available which are great starting points for discussion.

Below is a list of some which may be of interest:

Ruby's Worries by Tom Percival

I'm Calm by Jaymeen Sanders

How Big Are Your Worries Little Bear?

by Stephanie Fizer Coleman

Hey Warrior by Karen Young

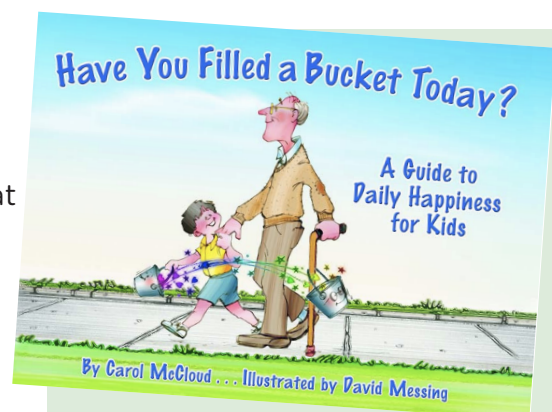
The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside

When My Worries Get Too Big by Karl Dun Buron

Wilma Jean the Worry Machine by Julia Cook

David and the Worry Beast by Anne Marie Guanci

When Worry Takes Hold by Liz Haske



We are sharing a lovely book called **“Have You Filled a Bucket Today?”** and we will be introducing our very own kindness bucket along with the concept of bucket fillers and bucket dippers!



What a difference a week makes!

Over the half term holiday we completed the refurbishment of the school toilets and I've had lots of positive comments and thumbs up from the girls in KS1 and lower KS2.

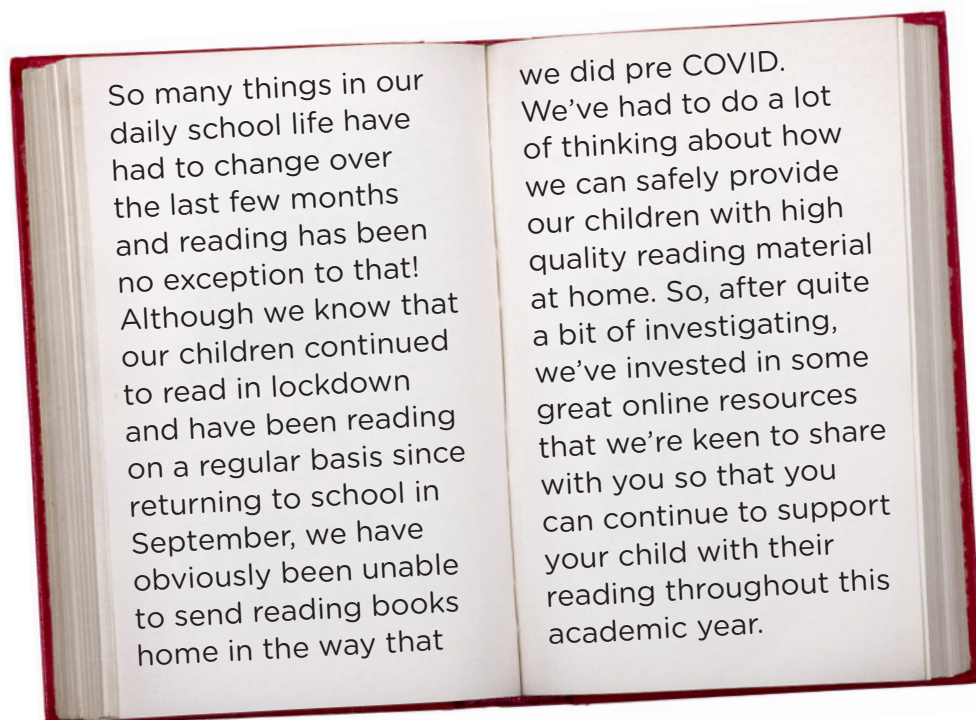
The **KS1 garden development** is looking good however we have hit a snag and the completion has been delayed. The wet weather over half term has saturated the ground and highlighted the problem of that area becoming waterlogged.

We have installed field drains which have worked outside **Ash class** however we still have a quagmire outside **Oak class** so we are installing further drainage this weekend.

Thank you to the families in Ash and Oak class for your patience and for using the main entrance, the wait will be worthwhile.

Reading at home with your child:

An Update from Mrs Grimes and Mr Warburton



BUG CLUB



Bug Club is a reading scheme of bright and colourful texts, many in a comic style that children can access online. In Reception and Key Stage 1, these texts allow the children to practise their phonic, key word and comprehension skills. In Key Stage 2, there is a greater focus upon the higher level reading skills of prediction, comprehension and

inference. **You can log on to Bug Club from any device that accesses the internet and get stuck into the reading material that your child's class teacher will set.** Class teachers can then monitor the books that children have read.

New governors

This term we are delighted to welcome two new governors both of whom have children in school.

Jessica McArdle, mum of **Daisy** in **Willow Class** and **Henry** in **Pear Class** is the new youth worker with Contagious. Jess has been co-opted to enhance our links and work within the community – she is also very helpful at delivering our Harvest gifts to the Food Bank!

Chrissy Morris-Watson is our new parent governor. Chrissy is mum of **Una** in **Beech Class** and also has a pre-school child. Chrissy will be a familiar face to many of you as she is an active member of the Friends.



Friends Update

Hi all, after a great start last year to our fundraising through the Halloween Disco, Christmas shopping event and raffle, Swapping and then the Valentines Disco, the rest of the social calendar was unfortunately put on hold! We are obviously limited in what we can do this year but we are hoping to have a Christmas themed outside quiz (more detail to follow soon) and hopefully lots more in the Spring and Summer terms (restrictions permitting!). Our aim is still to create a magical area for our children at school through the funds raised last year and we hope to enter the design phase in early 2021 and we will keep you posted on this.

Until then Stay Safe all –

Love, The Friends

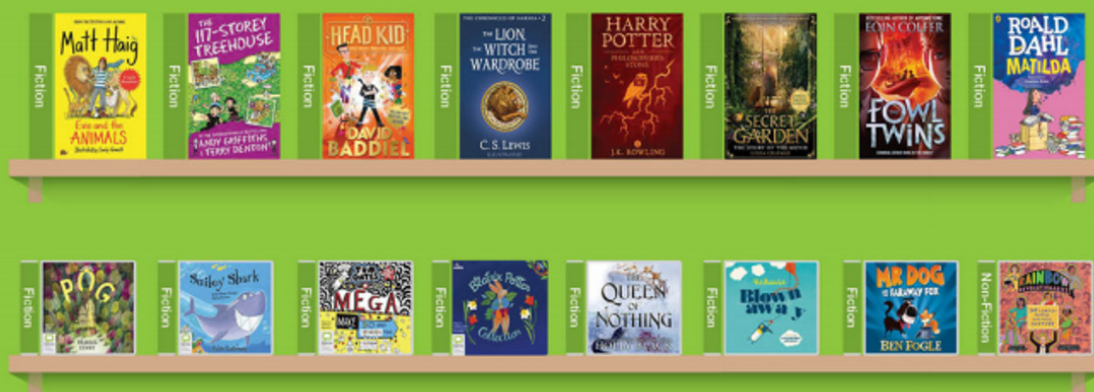
The Friends AGM will be held on
Tuesday 10th November at 8pm via google meet.

Use this code to join the meeting:

meet.google.com/rrm-zcex-jop

Sorry we can't provide the usual cheese and wine!

BORROWBOX IS ALWAYS OPEN



Northumberland Libraries

eBooks and eAudiobooks for Everyone

- Download up to 5 eBooks and 5 eAudio titles at a time.
- Titles are automatically returned at the end of the loan period, so there are no fines for late returns.
- Select 'BorrowBox Library' from the Apple App store or Google Play or via Games + Apps on Amazon Kindle Fire to download the BorrowBox app to your device.

All you need is a library card and PIN.

Not a library member?

Join online today at mylibrary.co.uk and get access straight away



All children in Years 5 and 6 have access to Reading Plus, an online reading program personalised to each child which targets the key skills of comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Regular use of Reading Plus develops your child's confidence in their own reading, their reading speed and their understanding of what they read. Reading Plus constantly monitors how fast (or slow) your child reads the texts they have been given and how accurately they are answering questions; adapting the texts it gives your child and the questions it asks based on this information. This means that the texts your child is given, the speed at which they are asked to read and the questions they need to answer are always based on their individual performance. In other words, if your child is stuck, it's always best to let them work out the answers for themselves!

To ensure that your child always accesses a text which is

suitable for them, we use the 'on hold' feature in Reading Plus. If your child is struggling with the complexity of their text or the difficulty of the questions, Reading Plus will put them 'on hold' and prevent them completing any more lessons until their class teacher has reviewed their work and adjusted the program accordingly. If your child uses Reading Plus, they will have at least one session a week in school with adult guidance, but we also ask that they read using Reading Plus at home for at least 30 minutes over the course of the week in addition to any lessons at school.

We're really excited about getting all children up and running with these new resources at home! Although we can't use reading records in the way that we have been used to, you will be able to email your child's class teacher if you want to give feedback on how your child has got on or if you have a question about the reading material set.

So, we look forward to sharing login details for these resources in the next week so that you can get on with them at home. Your child will receive login details for one or both of these resources depending on their year group.

We are very mindful that nothing replaces the feeling of sharing a 'real' book with your child and we look forward to the day when we can send physical reading material home once more. However, in the meantime, we feel strongly that the resources we've invested in are of a high quality and will help your child to make progress with reading. And, it goes without saying that we encourage you to use the books that you have at home so that children don't forget how to get comfy and turn the pages to get lost in a good book! To support this, we are also making sure that children are hearing and enjoying even more books than ever before whilst at school!

Happy reading everyone!

Seasonal News!

As we look forward to what was always a busy term we will try to make the most of the festivities whilst keeping the integrity of our bubbles.

We are looking in to ways to have a virtual Christmas Concert or Christingle and we'll let you know if we manage to do this.



Contagious Christmas Competition

We can all see that this Christmas is going to be very different from usual.

Christians Together in Alnwick would love to invite the children to participate in a Christmas picture competition!

There will be **3 age groups** each with its own subject:

Early years – a picture relating to the shepherds' story,

Key stage 1 – the journey or arrival of the Wise Men,

Key stage 2 – Jesus' birth and nativity scene.

For each category there will be a winner and a runner up.

The winner will receive a **£10 Amazon voucher!**

Please could all entries be submitted by **Friday 27th November** and emailed to

Jessica McArdle at:

contagious.alnwick@gmail.com

Christmas Lunch and Party

Wednesday 16th December

Christmas lunch will be followed by an afternoon of party games in the classrooms.

Please send children into school in their party clothes to enjoy a day of festive fun.

Children who attend nursery will have their party during the normal nursery session.

The **Friends of Swansfield Park** pay for Christmas lunch – if your child usually has a packed lunch but would like a Christmas dinner please order it at the office.



Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 18th December

Pay £1 to wear your Christmas Jumper and support **Save the Children**



Save the Children



Christmas Holidays

The school will close on **Friday 18th December** and re-open on **Monday 4th January 2021.**





Communications

We use many different ways to communicate with parents.



Keep up to date through the school website at:

www.swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk



Email the office at:

admin@swansfield.northumberland.sch.uk



Check the text messages received from **Teachers2Parents**

- please ensure that the office have an up to date mobile number for you.



Read the **Head Teacher's weekly blog** posted on the website and on Facebook every Monday for the very latest news.



DIARY DATES

Friday 13th November

Children in Need

Monday 16th November

Odd Socks Day to mark the start of **Anti-Bullying Week**

Wednesday 16th December

Christmas Lunch and Parties

Friday 18th December

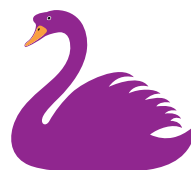
Christmas Jumper Day

School Closes

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Monday 4th January

School reopens



Swansfield Park
Primary School

Swansfield Park Primary School, The Avenue, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 1UL