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Monday 18th December 2023

Happy Holidays!

Dear Parent/Carer,

The children have worked incredibly hard over the past term and had lots of fun too! The Christmas holidays are here and it's time to reflect on the past term – and what a term it's been! We started the term by voting for a new Ribbon Parliament, who organised fund raising events for Macmillan Cancer Support, Murton Food Banks, and BBC Children in Need. After October half term, we welcomed Adam Bushnell (local author) to help inspire the children with their creative writing. To celebrate National Cinema Week, we visited Cineworld at Dalton Park and were invited to watch a pantomime performance of Beauty and the Beast at the Glebe Centre. Mr Murray led a very touching Remembrance Day service in school and senior pupils laid a wreath at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. During Anti-Bullying Week, 'Big Foot Arts' visited school to help the children identify what bullying behaviour looks like and how to ask for help (if they suspect it is happening). Then came Christmas! The children loved performing on the stage in front of a 'live' audience, enjoyed Christmas parties and the fayre, remembered the reason for Christmas in our annual service and were thrilled to groom the therapy ponies!

Please read on to find out what else has happened at Ribbon this term...

Nursery



The Nursery children have had a brilliant first term at Ribbon. During our family sessions, they have explored a range of core texts that have helped develop their story telling skills, expanding their vocabulary, and honing their listening and attention skills. The children have also enjoyed learning a range of new songs and rhymes and, have worked hard to develop their early phonics skills by hearing the syllables and initial sounds in words. The children have also used their fine and gross motor skills to mark make in all areas. They particularly enjoyed using the large chalk and paint brushes to mark make outside on the ground and the walls. Meanwhile, in the Den, the children explored a plethora of arts and

crafts, ranging from transient, moveable artwork to intricate cutting and collaging. Teamwork and cooperation flourished as the children wielded tools with care, showcasing a delightful exchange of vocabulary during these imaginative experiences. The Construction Area saw the children collaboratively fashioning bridges and ramps, conducting exhilarating tests to gauge the speed of cars based on ramp height. Over in the Small World Area, a symphony of laughter echoed as the children fashioned appropriate environments for their animal companions, engaging in thoughtful discussions about where these creatures might reside—be it the forest, jungle, or farm. Their conversations seamlessly wove in real-life experiences, adding depth to their imaginative activities. Outdoors, a journey into the natural world unfolded as the children harnessed the wonders of their surroundings, fashioning numbers, letters and shapes from leaves and painting pictures with sticks and flowers. Their imaginations took them on journeys as pirates and even monsters! Fridays brought excitement as the children ventured into the forest, embarking on thrilling forest expeditions, eagerly delving into the wonders of the woodlands to satisfy their curiosity and spark their sense of exploration. What a term it's been!



Mrs Suzanne Cartwright, Miss Abbi Hope & Miss Amelia Ord (Nursery Team)

Reception



It has been a very busy term in Reception. The children have had lots of opportunities to discover, explore, and gain valuable experiences in a wide range of contexts. They have read lots of exciting stories which have opened lines of enquiry for learning including: 'Owl Babies' where the children explored their feelings about starting Reception and leaving their grown up at home for a full day, 'Handa's Surprise' where the children learned about different cultures, during Black History Month. In the lead up to Halloween, the children read 'Room on the Broom' and were inspired to make different potions and spells. The children continue to enjoy their weekly visits to

both the Ribbon Forest and Murton Library. They have become much more confident in risk taking and assessing situations to decide if it's a safe choice to make. The children have really enjoyed exploring the forest and the Early Years outdoor area, in all weathers! They especially enjoyed the recent snowfall working together as a team to make the best snowmen and igloos. At the Ribbon Forest, the children learn about the world around them and have enjoyed finding bugs and insects in the undergrowth. Learning in a variety of environments promotes independence, organisation, problem solving, communication and teamwork skills.



Miss Gallagher, Miss Starkie, Mrs Hedley, Mrs Rooks, Mrs Jarvis, and Miss Taylor (Reception Team)

Learning Outside the Classroom – Autumn 2023

At Ribbon Academy, we firmly believe that learning outside the classroom helps put learning 'firmly' into context and provides invaluable opportunities for enquiry across the curriculum. Read on to find out more about our recent trips and visits around the region...

Year 1



This term, we welcomed Terry, the Community Champion, from Asda in Seaham to support the children with DT learning. The children had previously designed their fruit kebabs in school and had the chance to make them with Terry. The children have also been exploring the school grounds to help support their learning in the classroom. This helped the children develop their understanding of the size of the school grounds, enhance their mapping skills, and use of geographical language. During this period, the children developed their understanding of physical and human features whilst exploring the local area. The children also visited Holy Trinity Church to develop our understanding of Christianity and Christians' beliefs. Whilst inside the church, we spoke to Reverend Harrison who explained all about the church, its role in the community and what happens inside.



Mrs Johnson, Miss Layfield, Mrs Flower, Mrs Briggs & Miss Walton (Year 1 Team)

Year 2

Year 2 have had a fantastic Autumn term! The first trip of the term was a fieldtrip around Murton. The children used their excellent map and fieldwork skills from Geography lessons, to find their way around Murton. The children visited many different locations in the village including: the library, the Post Office, Holy Trinity Church, and the local shops. The children followed the route on their map brilliantly and could explain where they were located at different points. The next visit took the children to Durham Cathedral, which linked with our RE topic about St. Cuthbert. The children learned about St. Cuthbert's links with Durham Cathedral and his importance to Christianity in our region. A brilliant day was had by all with lots of new knowledge about this famous saint. As part of our History topic about the Great Fire of London, we travelled to Newcastle to learn about the Great Fire of Gateshead at the fascinating Discovery Museum. Finally, it was Year 2's turn to visit the cinema at Dalton Park for a special festive treat.

Mrs Lowes, Mrs Rookes, Miss Smith & Miss Naylor (Year 2 Team)

Year 3



In September, specialists from Wilderness Outdoor Education visited school and everyone took part in a 'Stone Age Survival' workshop. The children became hunter gatherers finding out how people in the Stone Age made fires to keep warm and cook food. The children also built shelters to protect them from the elements. Later in the term, Year 3 visited Rainton Meadows Nature Reserve in Houghton-le-Spring to deepen their learning about animals and humans in science. They completed workshops including pond dipping, mini beast hunting and a wildlife orienteering challenge. Our last trip of the term was a Geography field trip looking at land use in Murton. The children navigated their way around the village using a map. They were able to identify lots of different uses of land and finished at the Cenotaph admiring its newest addition – 'Children of Mothers'.



Mrs Bates, Mrs Dixon, Mrs Brown & Miss Naylor (Year 3 Team)
Year 4



This term, Year 4 had a fantastic time visiting the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle, where the children experimented with a variety of drawing techniques, including shading and cross hatching to produce observational drawing. The children also observed and reviewed a huge piece of abstract art before creating our own piece as a group. Their finished artwork reflected their own ideas, and they were very proud of the results. Year 4 also took part in a 'Romans on The Tyne' workshop, led by a team of experts from Newcastle University. This supported and enhanced learning about the Romans. The children explored a huge variety of artefacts and discussed what they were used for. Everyone agreed that bathroom hygiene has changed and improved since the Romans were here!



Mrs Callan, Mrs Tweedie, Mr Frankish, Mrs Millet, Miss Robson & Mrs Hosein (Year 4 Team)

Year 5



This term, children in Year 5 have visited The Oriental Museum in Durham, where they explored a range of artefacts from the ancient Egyptians. During the visit, the children expanded their knowledge on the mummification process and even got to see a real mummy! Another fantastic trip that the children have experienced this term, was to Teesmouth Field Centre, which allowed them the opportunity to learn more about the features of rivers. They got to visit the Transporter Bridge, talk about its structure, and learned about its history – the children were fascinated. In addition, the children spent a fabulous, snowy afternoon on the beach creating their own model versions of the River Tees – just wow! The highlight of the term was performing in front of family and friends at the Christmas concerts. The children sang beautifully and played instruments with such confidence – they are all superstars! What a productive term Year 5 have had! The children can't wait to see what spring brings.



Miss Cottrell, Mrs Sayer, Mrs D Richardson, Mrs Greenfield & Mrs Hosein (Year 5 Team)

Year 6



This term, Year 6 children travelled to Newcastle Central Mosque, where they found out about how Muslims worship and compared this to other religions that they have studied (previously at Ribbon). The children were very respectful throughout their session and gained valuable knowledge to support their Religious Education and British Values. More exciting learning took place in school when the Year 6 children took part in two WWII workshops. These workshops allowed children to experience life on the Home Front through participating in a range of activities:

cooking pancakes using rationed food items; taking part in soldier training with Mr Murray; learning to march in time and in sync; learning first aid techniques; using old-fashioned fire hoses; and using sandbags to place over 'bombs'. What a busy term - what excitement lies ahead in Spring?! This will be the last Spring term at Ribbon for our Year 6 children!



Miss Thorne, Miss Goodman, Miss Hutchinson, Mrs K Richardson & Mrs Hosein (Year 6 Team)

Learning Outside the Classroom – Spring 2024

Year 1 – Seaham Fieldwork Trip & Beamish

Year 2 – Baltic Centre of Arts & George Elmy Lifeboat (Seaham)

Year 3 - Wharton Park & Ancient Greek Workshop (in school)

Year 4 – Holy Trinity Church & Jarrow Hall

Year 5 – Holy Trinity Church & Woodhorn Museum (TBC)

Year 6 – Hancock Museum & Holy Trinity Church

Residential Experience - Summer 2024

Year 2 – Overnight camp in school (Summer 2)

Year 3 – Beamish (Summer 2)

Year 4 – Castle Howard (Summer 2)

Year 5 – Carlton Camp, Cleveland (Summer 1)

Year 6 – Wilderness Outdoor Education Camp (Summer 2)

Years 4, 5 & 6 – Paris (Summer 1)

As usual our termly trips and visits will continue next year, please watch out for further information early in the autumn term.

Spring & Summer Term Holiday Dates

After the Christmas break, we will publish a comprehensive list of events for the spring term. In the meantime, here are the holiday dates (for the remainder of the academic year):

School reopens – Thursday 4th January 2024

School closes for Half Term - Friday 16th February 2024

School reopens – Monday 26th February 2024

School closes for Easter – Thursday 28th March 2024

School reopens – Monday 15th April 2024

School closes for May Day Bank Holiday – Monday 6th May 2024

School closes for Half Term – Friday 24th May 2024

School reopens – Monday 3rd June 2024

School closes for the Summer – Friday 19th July 2024

Goodbye!

Today, we say goodbye to Mrs Hedley who has covered Miss Hammond in Reception over the past term, Miss Naylor who works with children across Years 2 & 3 & to Mrs Taylor who is part of the kitchen team. All three members of staff will be sorely missed however, we wish them well for the future.

Hello!

In January, we say 'Hello' to Miss Hammond who is our new Assistant Head in Early Years, to Miss Wylde, Mrs Peverley & Miss Kendall who will join the support team and Mrs Sutton and Mrs Johnson who will join the kitchen team.

It only remains for me to say, on behalf of everyone at Ribbon, a **huge thank you** for your unwavering support and encouragement over the past year. We hope that you have an enjoyable Christmas break, and we'll see you soon for the start of the spring term.

Warmest regards,

Mrs A Sheridan (Head teacher), Mr Houghton (DHT) and the Ribbon Team