



Ribbon Academy Trust
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Mrs A Sheridan (Head teacher)
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Friday 20th December 2024

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, BBC Children in Need and St Cuthbert's Hospice and raised awareness of diabetes. To celebrate National Cinema Week, we visited Cineworld at Dalton Park and were invited to watch a pantomime performance of Aladdin at the Glebe Centre. Mr Murray led a very touching Remembrance Day service where he paid tribute to local hero William McNally 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, ran a sponsored reindeer run (to raise fund for St Cuthbert's Hospice in Durham), remembered the reason for Christmas in our annual service and our youngest children were delighted to watch 'The Greediest Elf' and join 'The Ribbon Express!'

Learning Outside the Classroom – Autumn 2024

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 experiences around the school site and visits around the locality and wider region...

Nursery



What a wonderful start to the term it has been in Nursery! Our children have settled in so well and staff have been in awe watching them grow, learn, and explore. We are incredibly lucky to have our extensive outdoor area revamped (by Mr Murray and Miss Taylor) with gorgeous new resources and exciting areas for children to explore. It's been brilliant to watch them discover and engage with these new spaces, fostering their curiosity and sense of keen adventure. One of the highlights of the term has been Muddy Mondays. During

Muddy Monday, the children have ventured into the forest, embarking on thrilling expeditions to explore the wonders of the woodlands. Whether they are searching for insects, climbing trees or simply enjoying the fresh air, Muddy Mondays have been a perfect opportunity to spark the children's curiosity and imagination. What a busy and exciting term it has been in Nursery! We are incredibly proud of all the children and the progress they have made. It's been a joy to watch them develop both academically and personally and we're looking forward to even more adventures next term when a new group of children join the Nursery families.



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

Reception



This term, our Reception children have settled in beautifully, growing in confidence each day as they explore their surroundings. The children have had wonderful opportunities to build relationships, form friendships, and develop a love for learning. They have enjoyed sharing stories from our featured author, Julia Donaldson, including *The Gruffalo* and *Stick Man*. These stories have sparked curiosity and creativity, inspiring the children to take ownership of their learning. Activities have included making Gruffalo Crumble, designing family trees, and creating dens for the characters in the stories. Weekly visits to Murton Library have been an absolute highlight! The children have

thoroughly enjoyed browsing the book selection, thoughtfully choosing ones to bring back to our classroom. Our weekly forest visits and outdoor explorations have also been a source of great excitement. The children have become adept at assessing risks, making safe choices, and confidently exploring their environment. A particularly magical moment this term was observing the changes in weather, with frost and ice captivating the children's attention. From exploring freezing and melting to learning about condensation and evaporation, they've been fully immersed in discovering the world around them. It's been a fantastic term filled with growth, discovery, and joy. The children are excited to see what the next term brings!



Miss Hammond, Miss Starkie, Mrs Childs, Mrs Tulloch, Miss Kendall and Miss Walton (Reception Team)

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 in the Design Studio. 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 (in the correct context). During the term, the children developed their understanding of physical and human features whilst exploring the local area. Some children in Year 1 also enjoyed our residential experience which was a special Christmas sleepover in the school hall. They enjoyed having their tea in school, taking part in team games, meeting Elsa and the 'Elf on the Shelf' and a Ribbon disco. Everyone had a brilliant night!



Mrs Johnson, Miss Layfield, Miss Gallagher, Mrs Briggs & Miss Greenfield (Year 1 Team)

Year 2

Year 2 have had a fantastic Autumn term! The children used their excellent map and fieldwork skills from Geography lessons, to find their way around Murton for our first trip of the academic year. The child visited many different locations in the village including Murton 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 very famous saint. During Anti-bullying week, 'Big Foot Arts' visited school to help the children understand more about the impact of negative words and actions upon others. As part of our History topic about the Great Fire of London, the children travelled to Newcastle to learn about the 'Great Fire of Gateshead' at the fascinating Discovery Museum. The children can't wait to see what the spring term brings!

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

Year 3



It's been a busy term in Year 3! At the beginning of term, to further enhance historical study, Year 3 visited 'The Great North Museum' in Newcastle. At the museum, the children took part in a 'Stone Age' workshop to find out about life in this very important period of history. The children explored artefacts, looking closely at Stone Age to Iron Age objects from the period. 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 took part in a wildlife orienteering challenge. Our last trip of the term was a Geography field trip to look at land use in and around Murton. The children expertly navigated their way around the village using a map and were able to identify lots of different ways in which land is used. Roll on the spring term!



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

Year 4



This term, Year 4 had a fantastic time visiting the Segedunum in Wallsend, where the children trained to be Roman soldiers and learned about the day-to-day life of people in Roman Britain. The children also looked at the remains of the Roman fort on site, as well as seeing the ruins of Hadrian's Wall – fascinating stuff! Later in the term, Year 4 took part in a visit to the Centre for Life in Newcastle to complete a digestion workshop (as part of scientific learning). The children



recreated each stage of the digestive system, before carrying out some tests to determine health based on (thankfully fake) water waste samples! The children then had time to explore the rest of the centre, taking parts in all kinds of activities from presenting the weather to seeing a real human brain. Finally, they got to tour the night sky in the planetarium and watch a time travelling science show, which took us through some of the most amazing discoveries of the past two centuries. It's certainly been a busy term with lots to look forward to in the spring term!

Mrs Tweedie, Mr Frankish, Mrs Johnson, Miss Smith, Mrs Brown & 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 absolutely fascinated. In addition, the children spent time on the beach creating their own model versions of the River Tees! 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 clarity and confidence – they are all superstars! What a productive term Year 5 have had - they can't wait to see what spring brings!

Mrs Callan, Miss Cottrell, Mr Ellis, Mrs Percival, Mrs K Richardson & Mrs Hosein (Year 5 Team)

Year 6



This term, a large group of children travelled to Newcastle Central Mosque, where they found out about how Muslims worship and compared this practice to other religions that they have studied (during their time at Ribbon). The children were very respectful throughout the session and gained valuable knowledge to support their understanding of Islam 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'. One of the highlights was performing in front of a large audience during Christmas performances. What a busy term - what excitement lies ahead in Spring – the penultimate term at Ribbon for our children!



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

Learning Outside the Classroom – Spring Term 2025

Year 1 – Beamish & Seaham Fieldwork Trip

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

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

Year 4 – Holy Trinity Church & Jarrow Hall

Year 5 – Woodhorn Museum & Holy Trinity Church

Year 6 – Hancock Museum & Holy Trinity Church

Residential Experience – Spring Term 2025

Year 2 – 'Year 2 Fest' Sleepover in school (Summer 2)

Year 3 – Beamish (Summer 2)

Year 4 – Moor House (Summer 2)

Year 5 – York (Summer 1)

Year 6 – Wilderness Outdoor Education Camp (Summer 2)

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

Spring & Summer Term Holiday Dates 2025

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 – Tuesday 7th January 2025

School closes for Half Term - Friday 21st February 2025

School reopens – Monday 3rd March 2025

School closes for Easter – Friday 11th April 2025

School reopens – Monday 28th April 2025

School closes for May Day Bank Holiday – Monday 5th May 2025

School closes for Half Term – Friday 23rd May 2025

School reopens – Monday 2nd June 2025

School closes for the Summer – Friday 18th July 2025

Goodbye!

This term, we say goodbye to Miss Robson (Support Assistant), Mrs Davies & Miss Miller (Lunchtime Supervisory Assistants) and Mrs Honor (Kitchen Assistant). Mrs Davies and Miss Miller have over 50 years combined service as LSAs at schools in Murton (Murton County Primary and Ribbon Academy). All four members of staff will be sorely missed however, we wish them well for the future.

Thank you!

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 in January 2025!

Warmest regards,

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