



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school and although it seems we are well into January now, we would like to pass on our good wishes to you all for a happy and healthy New Year and, as always, we look forward to working with you in supporting your children here at school over the coming year.

There is a real play theme to this newsletter so we will certainly be looking to maximise our children's Rights to *Article 31 - the Right to Play*.



Outdoor Play!

We have always worked on trying to ensure our grounds are developed as much as possible to support children's play and learning - and there is always more we want to do! This year we are going to have a real push on maximising the use of our outdoors so, as well as appointing a 'Play Leader - Mrs Joanne White - to lead the developments, we are asking for your help and support too.

Our first challenge is to enable the use of our school field right through the year - not just in summer. We have been inspired by our colleagues at Rosa Street Primary who have developed their outdoor play so much, they have been awarded the OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) gold award. We're not quite at that stage yet, but with your support, Joanne's enthusiasm and our Rights Respecting Ambassadors leading the pupil's voice, we can really make a great start now.

How can you help?

This certainly isn't about cost! Developing play outside is about getting back to basics. Joanne has created a list of 'stuff' that we want to collect. I am sure that some of you will recognise the same things that you might have played with outdoors when you were younger! We want to develop areas on our school field such as Den Building, Role Play, Small world activities, Drama, Mud Kitchen, Investigation Station etc. Look out for Joanne's Wishlist - and the competition that our Rights Respecting Ambassadors are launching to see which class are the 'best collectors'!



Rights Respecting week - Monday 10th - Friday 14th February - Save the date!

More details in my next newsletter, but just to let you know, the whole school theme will be around the Right to Play - and we will hopefully be launching our Outdoor Play activities on our field.

We would love you to join us on **Friday 14th Feb** so that our Rights Respecting Ambassadors, and every class, can share with you the work they have been doing throughout the week.

RSPB School Birdwatch

On Tuesday 28th January, the Eco group members will take part in the national RSPB birdwatch. By taking part in this, we are helping the RSPB to keep track of all our British birds and any changes in their numbers and migration patterns. You can join in at home by going to the Big Garden Birdwatch website: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch>. The home birdwatch runs from the 25th of January to the 27th of January.



Half term holiday childcare

Did you see the app message regarding the provision of child care? If you would be interested in your child accessing Scamps during the February half-term break, then please make sure you book places via our schoolcomms system. We will only be able to make the provision if we do have sufficient interest and take-up.



Safer Internet Day - Tuesday 11th February

It's Internet Safety Day on Tuesday 11th February which falls in the middle of our Rights Respecting week this year. This fits nicely with our 'Right to play' and we will be thinking about how we can play safely online. We are going to perform a play all about internet safety - all the classes will be involved and we will present it as part of our Rights Respecting Assembly on Friday afternoon (14th Feb.).

As many of our children have received new devices at Christmas, it is important to us that they are safe online and we want to share the important messages with everyone and what better way to do this than in our assembly to which you are all invited.

Look out for details about the Rights Respecting assembly on the next newsletter.

Our own backyard! - Year 3 workshop

Durham University will be working with Y3 this Monday, helping them to investigate 'their own backyard!' This work will enhance their learning all about Ferryhill and how it has changed over the years. I know they will have an exciting day!

SNAG - School Nutrition Action Group meeting - Feb 5th at 2.00pm

Are you interested in food at school? Can you spare an hour or so once a term? Our SNAG group is made up of children, lunch staff, our cook and her managers, a teacher and parents. We really would like one or two more parents to join us if possible. Honest - we're not scary at all! We all have a chance to input into school menus, discuss breakfast club, packed lunches etc. One of the highlights is also that we usually have taster opportunities too. Please drop me a note, or email, if you think you would like to join us.



Educate and Celebrate Cake Off!

Before Christmas, we took part in the 'Educate and Celebrate Cake off' and we are delighted to announce that our cake came 2nd place in the competition - well done!

A huge thank you to Mrs Malkin who helped us with the making and decorating of the cake, and thank you to all of you for going on-line and voting for it.

We received our prize earlier this week - a cake stand, some rainbow coloured silicone cake cases and rainbow coloured sweat bands. I'm sure we'll be able to put the equipment to good use!

Well done and thank you for your support.



Winter weather!

As always, our weather is so unpredictable! So far, we haven't really seen any snow, but we never know what may be ahead. Children do still have playtimes outside and spend some time during the day outside in the fresh air as long as it is not too wet. However, if it gets too cold, we do reduce the length of time the children spend outside at any one time. Can I please just ask that all children come to school prepared for the cold weather, with all hats, gloves and scarves - clearly labelled with their name. If it does get snowy, a pair of wellies/boots are ideal, with a change of footwear (and an extra pair of socks!).

