



3rd December 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

This half term has to be one of the nicest times to work and be in a school. The anticipation of Christmas is lovely to see in the children and I'm sure you will be enjoying hearing some of the Nativity songs being sung at home. Our school is a happy school at the moment, with good behaviour from our pupils and excitement for the forthcoming period of Advent and Christmas. Our Belmont family is looking forward to sharing Advent and Christmas with you all, and I hope that this season is a time of love, joy and peace for everyone.

Kindest wishes,

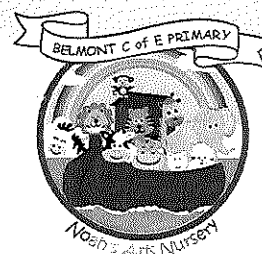
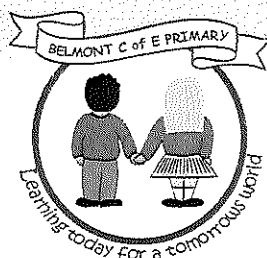
Mrs Harrison-Brown
Head Teacher

Staff News

Miss Bramfitt has given birth to a beautiful baby girl. Both Mum and daughter are doing very well. We wish them all the very best for this very exciting time.

Great News!

Our school has been ranked as 191 in the top 250 state primary schools in England. We featured in an article in The Sunday Times on November 18th. The schools in the top 250 were ranked by the aggregated average scaled scores achieved by children in Reading, Grammar and Maths from SATs taken in 2017. We are one of only two schools in Durham to feature in the top 250! Well done to all of our fantastic staff and children.



Parents Evenings

Thank you for all of our parents and carers who attended Parents Evening. One of our school Governors, Miss Cllr Corrigan, attended one evening to gather parent voice as part of our ongoing school development. We would like to thank you for all of your comments.

Positive Parental Comments

- My two girls really enjoy coming to school. Teachers are lovely, very friendly and approachable.
- The staff are always very friendly and open and seem to really care about the children.
- My two boys absolutely love coming to school every day. They embrace the school values.
- Our children have settled into Nursery and Reception extremely well. We are amazed at their progress in such a short space of time. Thank you to all the staff for their hard work.
- Teachers are caring and approachable and very encouraging!
- Such a happy place. Nothing is too much trouble. We love being a part of the Belmont family.
- My child started in September, he has settled in great, the staff are fantastic, would highly recommend.
- Thank you for always being available if anything needs discussing and for inviting input!
- My daughter is extremely happy in school and is making good progress with all aspects of her learning.
- Plenty of sports. Good school meals.
- Forest Club was a good idea and my daughter really enjoyed it.
- My child is extremely happy here at Belmont School.
- My daughter has settled in to the school amazingly. She has come on leaps and bounds. She loves the school, staff and has many friends now. Overall very happy parents. Thank you.
- Always great, engaging teaching in class. My child is always enthused to learn.
- Our daughter enjoys every day at school, she is always happy!

Suggestions for Development

- **Would like to see more community involvement in school**

This term we have been involved with the Remembrance Service and the local parish, Carrville Methodist Church continue to come to school to deliver Open the Book Worship, the choir will perform at the parish hall for the Christmas dinner for people living alone in the community and we collected food for the Durham foodbank at Harvest. We continue to increase opportunities for family including:

- *Meet the teacher*
- *McMillan coffee morning*
- *EYFS stay & play sessions*

- Christingle Services
- Harvest celebrations
- Broth & Bread for Grandparents
- Nativities
- Easter worships
- Family worships
- Sports Day

We will continue to plan as many opportunities as we can to work with the local community.

Year 4 visited St. Mary Magdalene as part of their science study in rocks. The aim was to gain an understanding of the everyday uses of rocks.

The children listened to an architect, stonemason and local members of the Church community. They were presented with architectural drawings, an explanation of how the sandstone was being restored and given samples.

Local members of the Church community took the children around the graveyard on a local history hunt. They discovered the grave of the local village carrier along with war graves.

Rev. Heather Murray presented a tour of the inside of the Church and its features.

It was a fantastic learning experience, co-ordinated by Geoff Moore – churchwarden and Year 4.

- Less homework in Key Stage 2 please

Homework within KS2 is one spelling task, one English task and one Maths task. Reading is twice weekly. If there is a problem or difficulty in completing this, please inform your child's class teacher.

- Struggle to follow hand in dates/days. Different days for different topics

A homework timetable will be forwarded to all parents in January, to ensure everyone is aware of homework days and handing-in times.

- Communication – at times have found out night before that girls have needed something for school the following day

We always aim to give our families plenty of notice for forthcoming events on our newsletters or by e-mail. We aim to give at least one weeks' notice. We apologise if this has not been the case.

Health Review by the Local Authority and Diocese

We had a very successful health review (a one-day inspection) by the Local Authority and Diocese on the 18th October, the Review focussed on evaluating the progress we have made in the areas of further improvement from our last Ofsted inspection in December 2017. Two Local Authority Education Development Partners and one Assistant Director of Education, School Effectiveness partner from the Diocese visited us on the day. The inspection involved: joint lesson observations of all classes and Nursery, observations of intervention groups, observations of worship, work scrutiny of all subjects, discussions with Governors, SLT, middle leaders and SENDCo, pupil voice, observations of playtimes, lunchtime and the beginning and end of the school day, parent voice, scrutiny of school improvement plan and documentation resulting from monitoring by leaders, scrutiny of the single central record, scrutiny of the pupil premium plans and hearing pupils read.

It was a very successful review and substantial evidence was gathered to show very good progress in 5 of the 6 areas for improvement. We have improved the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently strong across all classes; we have improved positive learning behaviours across all classes; all subject books are of a high quality and there is significant improvement in the development of the pupil's subject specific knowledge and skills and there is evidence of rapid progress with our SEND work and Governance. We have made progress with middle leadership and we will continue to gather evidence of the impact that middle leadership is having on improving teaching and learning.

The staff have been thanked and praised for their hard work in their last two terms, which has resulted in rapid school improvement.

I look forward to sharing the review report with parents when we receive it.

Morning Snacks for KS2 Children

A morning snack may be brought in from home to school to eat during morning break time. Please remember that this must be a healthy snack such as a piece of fruit. This must be kept in your child's bag, as the children cannot access their packed lunch until lunchtime. Thank you for your help with this. Our KS1 and EYFS children receive a daily free piece of fruit.

School Crossing Patrols

We have managed to extend the time that the school crossing on Buckinghamshire Road will be patrolled. This crossing is now patrolled until 3.35p.m. There is still a vacancy for a school crossing officer on The Links.

Shoebox Appeal

Thank you very much for your donation of a shoebox for the Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas appeal. We have sent 32 boxes this year – thank you!

Poppy Appeal

We raised £175.85 for the British Legion poppy appeal – thank you!

Children in Need

We raised £404.62 for Children in Need this year. Amazing! Thank you for your kind donations.

Enterprise Week

During the week beginning Monday 3rd December, all children will be taking part in our annual Enterprise week. Each class decide on their project, and, working as a small business, make and sell a product with the aim of making a profit. These products will be sold at our Christmas Fair at the end of the week. The children always enjoy this challenge and their aim is to be the class making the most profit! (It is also very competitive amongst the staff in school!)

Important Dates

Tuesday 4th December

Christingle Services – Dove Hall – All welcome!

9.15a.m. KS2 (Y6, Y5, Y4 & Y3)

2.45p.m. EYFS & KS1 (Nursery, Reception, Y1 & Y2)

SEN Parent Sessions

Appointments from 3.30p.m. with class teachers

Wednesday 5th December

Relax Kids Assembly for parents in Year 4 – 2.15p.m.

Thursday 6th December

Open the Book Worship in school

Friday 7th December

PTA Christmas Fair Dove Hall 3.30 – 4.30 p.m.

Our Christmas Fair takes place between 3.30p.m. and 4.30p.m. on Friday 7th December. As usual, there will be a variety of stalls including a raffle, tombola stalls, craft activities, refreshments and games. In addition to these, the children's enterprise goods which they will have made during the week will be on sale. Please collect your children as usual at the end of the school day before coming to the fair.

Tuesday 11th December

KS1 Nativity (Y1 & 2) Baubles – Dove Hall 9.15 a.m.

KS2 Nativity (Y3, 4, 5 & 6) The Christmas Jigsaw – Dove Hall 2.15p.m.

Wednesday 12th December

KS2 Nativity (Y3, 4, 5 & 6) Dove Hall – 9.15 a.m.

KS1 Nativity (Y1 & 2) Dove Hall – 2.15p.m.

Pantomime – Belmont Community School

Years 4, 5 and 6 will visit Belmont Community School to watch their pantomime.

Thursday 13th December

9.15 a.m. EYFS Nativity - Oops a Daisy Angel – Rainbow Hall

2.15 p.m. EYFS Nativity – Oops a Daisy Angel – Rainbow Hall

Although we do not wish to ticket the EYFS nativities in the Rainbow Hall, to help us meet fire regulations and for the comfort and safety of all, please can we ask you that only two family/friend members attend in the morning and two in the afternoon. If your child is not in Nursery on Thursday 13th December please check with Mrs Sleeman to which performance your child will be in.

Christmas Parties

Monday 17th – EYFS (Reception and Nursery) – Your child can come to School in their party clothes

	- Years 3 and 4	} Please bring party clothes in a bag
Tuesday 18 th	- Years 1 and 2	
	- Years 5 and 6	

Wednesday 19th December

Team treat and Christmas movie afternoon.

Christmas Dinner and Christmas Jumper Day

Christmas dinner will be enjoyed by the children and staff on Wednesday 19th December. The children can wear their Christmas jumpers or tops too! (Uniform trousers, skirts etc. to be worn please).

Thursday 20th December

- 9.30 a.m. EYFS and KS1 visit to St. Mary Magdalene for Christmas Service
- 10.45 a.m. KS2 visit to St. Mary Magdalene for Christmas Service
- Choir will visit the parish hall to entertain the members of the community who live alone.
- Break up for the Christmas holiday break.

Pupils and Staff return to school on Monday 7th January

Christmas at St. Mary Magdalene

Sunday 9th December 2.30 – 4.30 p.m. – St Nicholas Church Puppet Show and Christmas party – Belmont Parish Hall

Thursday 13th December – Salvation Army Christmas Carols 7.15 p.m.

Tuesday 18th December 3.30 p.m. – Fire Service Carol Service

Sunday 23rd December 6.00 p.m. – Readings, Reflection and Carols

Christmas Eve 5.00 p.m. – Nativity

Christmas Day 10.00 a.m. - Holy Communion