



# Acomb First School Fortnightly Newsletter

20<sup>th</sup> October 2022

## Upcoming dates

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October**  
Teacher training day –  
school closed

**Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October**  
Non-school uniform  
Halloween Day £1 donation

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November**  
**3.15- 4pm**  
Coffee and Cake drop in

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November**  
Children in Need

**6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> December**  
Parents Evening 3.30-6.00

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December**  
Christmas Jumper Day

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December**  
Nativity performances

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December**  
Christmas Dinner Day

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December**  
Christmas Carol Service  
1030- 1130

## Miss Williamson's message

I cannot believe we are already at the end of the first half term of this academic year. The time really has flown over.

I have been reflecting today on the time I have been at Acomb and how this academic year has started. Firstly, I have been blown away by the community spirit. This week, in addition to many others, has involved members of our community making a real difference to our school. Some examples include: parents moving 3 tonnes of sand and gravel into our new reception continuous provision, the huge number of donations to support our collection for the local foodbank and also the invaluable feedback we have received from parents about what is working well and suggesting ways of further improving what we are doing. Acomb really is the definition of community spirit and I cannot thank you all enough for your time, effort and support.

The Harvest festival was the first big event of this academic year and the first performance for many of our children since before Covid. I really couldn't have been prouder and, if all of your smiling faces were anything to go by, you were too! The children did such an amazing job of singing and reading. Huge thanks must also go to the staff for all of their hard work in preparation for that.

Finally, I cannot end the half term without mentioning how wonderfully well the children have responded to the new curriculum. Their enthusiasm and excitement really does shine through when I am in classes and talking to them about their learning. I am really looking forward to you having the opportunity to look at their books at parents evening to see just how well they are doing.

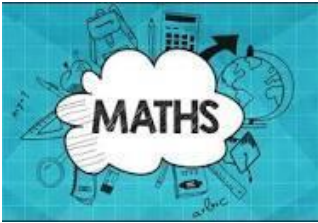
As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at school or by email:

[hannah.williamson@acomb.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:hannah.williamson@acomb.northumberland.sch.uk)

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,  
Miss Hannah Williamson

### **Maths teaching from after half term**



From after half term, the children in Maple and Chestnut classes will be splitting into year groups for their Maths lessons. As the curriculum for each year group is different it makes teaching in mixed ages very difficult and often means the teachers have to try and teach two different concepts at the same time. To ensure that all children are given the best curriculum possible we will be splitting into year groups so that each year group is getting quality teaching for the whole hour based only on the learning they should be covering.



### **Halloween non-uniform on the first day back**

On the first day back we will have a non-school uniform day for a £1 donation. Children can come in Halloween fancy dress or normal clothes for the day. Please ensure there are no scary masks or replica weapons etc.

The PTA are also offering face painting and crafts at the end of the school day. Please see the letter sent about that for information. Finally, we will be having a Halloween themed lunch on Monday. We are sure the children will have an amazing first day back.

### **The school website**

I have been doing a lot of work on the school website over the last term in the hope it provides you with more information, is more accessible and really showcases what Acomb is about.

On there you will find information about your child's learning, information about the school, policies and more.

I have created a reading section called 'Reading@Acomb' where you will find lots of information, helpful videos, links and more about the reading approaches we use in school (Read Write Inc and Accelerated Reader).

In addition to this, there is a safeguarding section where you can find advice and places to seek support if you or your child needs support. As always though, please do come and speak to school if you need any support. The designated safeguarding lead is me (Miss Williamson) and the deputy designated safeguarding lead is Miss Dunlavy.

If you have a look and think there is anything missing or you would like more of something please do let me know. I really want this to be a useful place for parents, children and other visitors to have access to.



### **Read Write Inc Phonics**

We have carried out assessments in Read Write Inc this week and have been very impressed by the progress made through our consistent use of the reading scheme and also all of the support you have provided at home. Many children have made accelerated progress and therefore there will be changes to groupings and different books coming home after the holiday.

It has also been wonderful to hear from so many parents that they have seen real improvements in their children's reading and love of reading as a result of the work we are doing.

I realise that reading the same book 3 times at home can get repetitive but it really does impact positively on children's fluency and it is essential that children read the book which focuses upon the sound they are learning that week. Oxford Owl is a brilliant resource where we can share the books with you digitally to read at home. I am aware that some families do not have access to IT equipment at home so we will ensure that these families are provided with physical books. We will base this on the responses to the IT access questionnaire. We will try to provide opportunities for all children to access Oxford Owl at an appropriate time in school.

Unfortunately, I simply cannot afford to buy more books at the moment so that every child can bring home multiple physical books. My hope for the future is that we will have enough money to purchase more physical copies of the fiction books, non-fiction books and book bag books which will mean the children have a choice of 3 books to read. This, at the moment, is not possible due to the costs but it is in my future plans. We are grateful for all of your support with making the current system work so well.



### **The Reading Shed**

This week we have opened our very own reading shed in the yard. The school council last year were instrumental in this idea and it is so lovely to see it become a reality. The children were all very excited by it and were so keen to share stories (or Horrible History facts!) with each other. This will be a fantastic resource and will be maintained by our Reading Buddies to ensure it remains well organised and loved for everyone to enjoy.

### **Coffee and cake afternoon drop in**



Following discussion with some parents, I have decided to offer a coffee and cake afternoon where parents can stop by to enjoy an informal chat with some staff and governors. This will hopefully give you the opportunity to get to know new staff and governors a little more. You can also use the opportunity to have a look around the beautiful learning environments including our new library and outdoor continuous provision. Coffee, tea and cake will be available for a small donation.



### **Governor appointments**

I am delighted to inform you that we had two applicants apply for the two parent governor roles which were advertised. As they were the only two applicants, these parents do not need to go through any further voting process. I would like to officially welcome Louise Morshead and William Johnson to our Governing Body. We also have a new staff governor – Miss Robyn Derby.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those governors who have come to the end of their time on the governing body (Ivor Knox, Joanne Bushell and Miss Lauren Dunlavy). Their time, dedication and hard work as governors is very much appreciated.



### **Harvest Donations**

Today Cody, Scarlett and Sophie, some of our school council members from Chestnut class, had the very important job of helping me to take along all of the fabulous donations from the Harvest Festival to the Hexham Foodbank.

The children really enjoyed presenting all of our donations and finding out about how the donations will help our local community. Many thanks to you all again for your generosity and support with this.