



Cragside Church of England Primary School

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“Let Your Light Shine”

Headteacher: Joanne Parker

Deputy Headteacher: Caroline Bilton

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10th September, 2021

Dear Cragside Family,

Well that feels like one of the fastest weeks ever! I am so proud of how well our children have returned to school. During the past four days, Mrs Bilton and I have spent some time in all of the classrooms in school and have enjoyed every single minute of this. It is an absolute delight to see your children so happy in their learning, to hear them singing and to see them playing on the yard in the gorgeous weather which we have had this week. When Mrs Bilton and I see the children coming into school with their big smiles and cheerful ‘good mornings’ and leaving with their equally big smiles, then I know that we are all doing a good job!

Our Reception children have now completed their first week in school and we are so impressed by how well they have managed their transition into school. They have shown a real eagerness about their learning, been curious and excited about their environment and are certainly becoming familiar with all of the new and different routines of school. Equally we have welcomed a number of children who have joined other classes throughout school and it has been a joy to see these children settle into our Cragside family with ease.

School Planners/Reading records

As most of you know, by now your children would normally have been given their school planner which contains some helpful information for your child’s learning and which we also use to record their reading at home and school. I am very frustrated that these planners have not yet been delivered to school, despite being ordered in July. The company who publish these have shared that they have experienced a lot of staffing shortages due to the ‘Pingdemic’ and have assured us that they will be delivered to us by 17th September at the latest. We have sent children home with a temporary reading record which we can then add to their planner. This means that children can still achieve their reading tallies and earn their bookmarks and books.

Social media

Many people describe our school as a ‘hidden gem’ within Cramlington and I am really keen to promote and celebrate our school more widely within the local and wider community. To support this, we are in the process of redeveloping our school website and use of social media more widely. Please be assured that any open social media will contain generic school information and will not contain any photographs or identities of children. As you know children’s safety is at the heart of our school and I would never do

anything to compromise this. We continue to have our closed, protected Twitter profile, where access can only be given by staff in school. For any new families, you will find this by searching Cragside Primary or @CragsidePrimary. I have opened a second Twitter account this week, which is an **open** Twitter account. You can find this by searching CragsideCEPrimary or @CragsideC. Again, just to reiterate, these open accounts will not share any images or identities of children.

Curriculum Newsletters

You will receive an email from your child's Year group team with an outline of the curriculum for this half term. We have looked really closely at our curriculum to ensure that our offer to children is broad and balanced and inspires the children with a joy of learning and a curiosity to know more and have that thirst for knowledge. You will now also know which days your children have PE, forest school etc, which will help you to organise things like uniforms and wellies if needed.

Staffing updates

During the Summer holidays, Mrs Storey has taken up a new appointment in a secondary school within Northumberland. Mrs Storey was employed at our school for many years, providing administrative support to help keep our school running smoothly. We wish Mrs Storey well in her new role. We also welcome Mrs Julie Graham to our staff team. Mrs Graham has been appointed as our School Business Manager. We warmly welcome Mrs Graham to our staff team.

Flu Immunisations

You should now have received information from the NHS about general flu immunisations which take place during the autumn term for children in Reception, Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6. Thank you to all parents who have returned these forms. Like you, we are very much looking forward to a continuous and uninterrupted academic year, where all of our children are in school, as much as possible. This immunisation programme will certainly help our children to achieve this and hopefully minimise any opportunities for illness.

Covid updates

Our structures and processes which we have in school are all running smoothly and we are feeling more 'normality' in school, whilst still being sensible and cautious in our approach. Our aim really is to ensure that any changes have the least amount of impact on the children's teaching and learning experiences, but that we have minimised the opportunity for any potential transmission of the virus. A key part of ensuring this is good hand and respiratory hygiene and the cautious approach of walking before we run. Please also ensure that if your child is displaying any symptoms of Covid they take a PCR test before being brought into school and only come into school once a negative result is confirmed or they return from isolation if they have received a positive result and are well enough. If a child does test positive, please can you notify school so that we can carefully monitor the number of cases in school.

National Recognition for staff from our school

I am really proud to share some of the important work Mrs Bilton has been doing during her secondment with the [Education Endowment Foundation](#). [Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1](#), is a document used by teachers nationally, endorsed by the Department for Education, to support teachers to improve their teaching of reading and writing. Mrs Bilton has co-authored the report, with the help of Miss Rennison and Mrs Pemberton to provide additional expertise. As our school provides ongoing national support, Mrs Bilton will continue to work with teachers to deliver training and write further guidance for Key Stage 2 teachers. As we move forward, I am excited to see how our children and staff will benefit from all of the research gained by Mrs Bilton during her secondment with the EEF and how this will further build upon the expertise which we have in school to ensure that your child has the very best teaching and learning experience.

Weekend Challenge

Each weekend we will continue to send home some different challenges for the children to do at home. These are all completely voluntary. We have a Facebook account which you could post pictures of the children doing some of these activities. The address is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/795896960817927/>. You will need to confirm you have a child in our school and also that you will follow the admin rules for our account. Alternatively you can email them into admin@cragside.northumberland.sch.uk. I would love to see your child engaging with these!

Our weekend challenge for this weekend is:

Go for a walk amongst some trees and look at all of the different types of leaves which are beginning to fall from the trees. How many leaves can you count? Can you make a picture with these leaves? What do you think might happen next to the leaf? Why is it falling from the tree?

On a personal note, I would like to say a huge thank you for all of your kind words and encouragement which you have given me this week. I believe our school truly is a special place and I feel like the luckiest Headteacher to have such joyous children, committed staff and supportive parents. Thank you.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend. I'm sure that the children (and possibly staff!) will all sleep well after such a busy start of term.

I look forward to seeing you all on Monday.
Joanne Parker