



Welcome back to school – we hope you all had a relaxing break. This term looks like it might be busy. We'll keep you updated and give as much notice of events as we can, although not all dates are finalised.

## Poppy Appeal

This week we are selling items for the Royal British Legion's poppy appeal. On sale will be wristbands, reflector poppies, snap bands and zip pulls. Poppies can also be bought for a donation.

There will be a Remembrance service at the Hesleden War Memorial on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 10.45am. Children attending from school can help to lay a wreath.

## Events for children this half-term

Tu 7 Nov	KS2 Tag rugby (group)
Wed 8 Nov	C2 – Feelings & Friendships session with the Piece of Mind team
	C4 – STARS Voices
Fri 10 Nov	Remembrance Assembly with Bill Elliott
Mon 20 Nov	Fr Kyle working with C2 & C4
Tue 21 Nov	Y5/6 Sportshall Athletics event (group) (East Durham College)
Tue 28 Nov	Y3/4 Sportshall Athletics event (group) (East Durham College)
Tue 5 Dec	Fr Kyle working with C3
Th 14 Dec	Adam Bushnell
	Festive Run (with Sports Partnership)

## Parent Consultations

This half-term we will hold face-to-face parent/teacher meetings so that you can find out how your child has settled into this year's routines, and how they are getting on in their learning. Meetings will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday 22 November, from 1pm for Y1-6 and from 3pm for Reception. You will receive your time slot very soon, but please let us know if it is not convenient and we will do our best to change it.

Family Fridays will run in the alternate half-term to parent consultations so that you have an opportunity every half-term to speak to teachers. We will remind you of the spring dates nearer the time.

## Attendance and Punctuality

Mrs Medcalf has been sending weekly texts to families if children are late to school. Over time, this builds up to time lost in learning. Our doors are open between 8.40-8.55am and children start to learn with their 'morning challenge' as soon as they enter the class.

Each half-term, we will also present certificates for children who have 100% attendance (we gave out 41 before half-term), but we will also be sending letters to families where children's attendance falls within the Government's definition of 'persistent absentee' – where attendance falls below 90%. Sometimes there are very good reasons for absence, but often we may recognise a pattern, or find that random and unexplained absences occur. At this time in the year children who have so far missed 1 week (or 5 days) will have an attendance of 87%. Without further absence, this should increase as we have more days in school.

## Governors

We have appointed a new parent governor, Miss Madelaine Fallow, following our advert in the September newsletter. We still have one parent vacancy and one co-opted vacancy remaining on our Governing Body.

## Christmas Events – Initial information

Please find a list of events that we are planning for this festive season. We thought it would be useful for you to have the dates for your diary as early as possible and you will find these below. Further details for each event will follow, as you will appreciate many are still in their planning phase! \*Please note that other events are planned, but dates have not yet been confirmed. If any of the dates below need to be changed, we will give you as much notice as we can.

Date	Who	What
Tu 5 Dec; 9.30am and Wed 6 Dec; 9.30am & 2pm	All children and families	Christmas performances – ticketing information will be shared soon
Tu 5 Dec; 4pm	C3 & C4 children	Village Christmas tree lighting (KS2 children to stay in school) – Santa hats are optional!
Fri 8 Dec; 1.30pm	All children & families	Christmas Fair (see below)
Mon 11 Dec; 2pm	All children & families	Christmas service at St Andrew’s, Blackhall
Wed 13 Dec	All children	Christmas lunch & Christmas jumpers
Fr 15 Dec	All children	Party activities and movies (C3 & C4 4pm finish as Halloween)
Tu 19 Dec	R-Y6	Pantomime (Yarm) – information & costs to follow

Additional events we hope to plan:

- Enterprise week (idea from School Council)
- Children’s Christmas film night fundraiser & refreshments
- Brass (for players’ parents) – possibly Tu 5 Dec (afternoon) – to be confirmed with Mr Hind

### Christmas fair request

We are 3-4 weeks away from our Christmas fair, but we are beginning to think about how to make it a big success with lots to see and do. We ask for your generosity in donating the following items, please:

- Cakes (on the day of the fair)
- Santa jars; jam jars filled with sweets or other small objects
- Bottles/tins for the tombola
- Lollies/small chocolate bars for a lucky dip
- Raffle donations (for children – games/toys; and for adults)

And if you have any other suggestions or ideas, please let us know – we hope the enterprise week planned by the school council will create lots of other goodies.

## 2023-2024 Holidays & Staff training days

Holiday	Closing Date	Re-open for Teaching Purposes
Christmas 2023	Tuesday 19 December 2023	Thursday 4 January 2024
Spring half-term 2024	Friday 16 February 2024	Monday 26 February 2024
Easter 2024	Thursday 28 March 2024	Monday 15 April 2024
May Day 2024	Friday 3 May 2024	Tuesday 7 May 2024
Summer half-term 2024	Thursday 23 May 2024	Monday 3 June 2024
Summer 2024	Tuesday 23 July 2024	

**School will be closed for the following staff training days:**

<b>Mon 27 Nov 2023</b>	<b>Wed 3 Jan 2024</b>	<b>Fri 24 May 2024</b>
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Mrs Dunn

Letters and information sent home are uploaded to our website at least half-termly, visit us at [www.hesleden.durham.sch.uk](http://www.hesleden.durham.sch.uk); Up-to-date news and pictures are shared through our Twitter account, including home learning opportunities and other useful links, follow us at [www.twitter.com/hesledenprimary](https://www.twitter.com/hesledenprimary)



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School website