



Dear Parents/Carers,

The spring term comes to an end this week and as always the 'run in' to the Easter holidays has been a busy time for the children in school. In recent weeks we have had the presentation of our spring term writing and maths awards, the Year 4 gymnastics and Year 3 Tri-golf events, a rugby festival for Year 3, the Year 5 skipping festival and the next Roots and Shoots visit to Alnwick Garden, a Nursery induction visit for our new starters, a visit from Year 7 students from CLV to share stories with Year 1, the Rocksteady class bands and singing club / violin concerts plus the spring term parent appointments which were very well attended – thank you!

Tomorrow we have our RE day before our Easter Golden Day on Friday which brings the spring term to an end – don't forget we finish at 2pm on Friday for the start of the Easter holidays.

Residential visits

- Last week, saw the majority of the **Year 5** class involved in the 3-day **residential visit to Robinwood**. This is the first time we have used this centre (near Alston) and it certainly provided a high-quality visit with an action-packed programme of activities. The 3 staff who volunteered to accompany the children came back full of praise for the attitude, behaviour and enthusiasm shown by the children who were apparently regularly commended for their behaviour by all the Robinwood staff. This is fantastic news and something we do not take for granted. We are very proud of them all!
- In June the focus moves to Year 6 as they head to York for their 3-day residential visit. A reminder that the balance of the payments for this are **due by Monday 28th April** (the day we return from the Easter holidays).



Fundraising – thank you!

- A few weeks ago we enjoyed our Red Nose Day and the break time treats. The final total raised for **Comic Relief** was **£136**.
- The '**chocolate Easter raffle**' tickets have also been selling well. This raffle will be drawn in classes on Friday afternoon as part of Golden Day so there is still time to hand in any last minute tickets/money in the next two days. All proceeds go towards our future Golden Day funds.
- We also had confirmation this week that the **ASDA cash pot** total of £920 had been transferred to our school fund account! We can now purchase some extra Design Technology resources. Great news!



Brainwaves and Peer Mentors

Our older children in Year 5 / Year 6 always take their roles and responsibilities seriously, but this half term I have been particularly impressed with:

- The way the **Year 5 Peer Mentors** have adapted to their new role by supporting younger children in school – using time before school and at breaks / lunchtimes to help out those who may be struggling a little bit with various aspects of school life. There have been some real success stories with how well this is working. Well done Year 5!
- The enthusiasm shown by the **Brainwaves** team in collating pupil views about breaks/lunchtimes, deciding on ideas for improvements and sourcing new equipment. They have put into place a revised programme of playground zones and organised different activities throughout the week including hooping/skipping, building blocks/stepping stones, circus skills (juggling, plate spinning), using the bum boards, arranging colouring activities, use of chalks, providing footballs for each class etc. Our lunchtimes have run far more smoothly as a result. Thank you!

Dinner money and Breakfast Club payments

If anyone has any money that still needs to be paid for school dinners and / or breakfast club the office staff have asked me to remind you that these must be paid by Friday morning at the very latest as we need to be able to balance the books for the end of term. Please ring school to speak to Mrs Bainbridge (dinner money) or Mrs Johnson (breakfast club) if you have any queries about this or are not sure what you owe.

FSM vouchers for groceries and 'Holiday Activities'

- **The HUGGG vouchers (groceries)** will again be available over the Easter holiday for those families eligible for benefit based free school meals. Please look out for the email notification so that you can activate and use the vouchers over the holiday period. Remember these vouchers have an expiry date of 30th April and NCC have asked us to reinforce the following message:

Please ensure this voucher is used for its intended purpose only. The voucher must not be sold, passed on or used for any other purpose. If you are not able to use it, or do not require the vouchers for food/clothing please contact the school and arrange for its return. Northumberland County Council reserve the right to carry out checks to ensure the vouchers are used for their intended purpose, and by accepting this voucher you agree to these checks being undertaken. If anyone is found to mis-use the voucher Northumberland County Council may take action to recover the money, in full, from you as well as taking any other action they deem appropriate.

- **'Holiday Activity and Food' programme (HAF) vouchers** have also been made available for the first time and went live on 25th March. The vouchers can be activated via the email or text sent to families directly and this will allow you to see the list of possible options which you may wish to sign up for over Easter. I know that several families have already done this and found several useful activities for their children to take part in. Please note that not all activities are suitable for every year group and that Places for the different activities are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Holiday reminders

- **Parents of Nursery pupils will hear on 16th April about the allocation of places for Reception 2025.** As has been the case in recent years we look set to be over-subscribed which may mean that a small number of families who have children attending our Eastlea Nursery will not secure a place for their child in our Reception class for September 2025. Unfortunately it is something that is totally out of our hands. We are bound by what is called 'infant class size legislation' which means we are legally not allowed to go over our school admission number of 30 in Reception. For families who do not get their first choice of schools it is always a difficult time and it will be made harder this year as Eastlea staff will not be on hand to offer advice and support on the morning of allocation day. If there are any questions or concerns we will be more than happy to discuss these as soon as we return after Easter.
- Our **Castles Reading Challenge** doesn't stop over Easter. If your child reads and has their reading record signed once at any time over the Easter break then this counts as a sticker on their bookmark...it is 'Gold 10' on our weekly schedule. The first GOLD awards will be presented at the end of the first week back after the holiday.
- A reminder for **Year 3** that they are taking part in a **'Toon Team Day'** on the first day back (Monday 28th April) with a visit to St James' Park as part of our work with the Newcastle United Foundation. The letter and information shared by Mrs Powells contained all the details.

Happy Easter and Golden Day

Golden Day takes place on **Friday**. It is a non-uniform day with no particular theme and no fine to pay. If your child is a winner in the Easter raffle then they will bring their prize home that afternoon. **Remember the children finish early at 2pm** (except for morning Nursery pupils who finish at the usual time of 11.50am) ready to start their Easter holiday

I hope you all have a good break over the holidays and we look forward to seeing everyone back when Eastlea reopens for all pupils on Monday 28th April.

Miss Beeston, Head Teacher

