



**Hugh Joicey**  
C of E Aided First School



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*As we reach the end of the school year, I hope you can indulge me in taking a moment to reflect on my first full year as Headteacher here at Hugh Joicey First School.*

*From the very start, I have been overwhelmed by the warmth, kindness, and support shown by the wonderful school community. Thank you to all parents, carers, governors, and friends of the school for making me feel so welcome. It's been a pleasure getting to know you and working together for the benefit of our children. To the children: your hard work, curiosity, and 'love of learning' have made every day a joy and a privilege. You are the heart of our school, and seeing your enthusiasm and achievements is truly inspiring.*

*I make no apology for highlighting two things ahead of the Summer - things you will have heard me mention one or two times before!). Firstly, and most importantly, please stay safe while you're enjoying the holidays (we have included some additional safeguarding information with this communication). Secondly, we have sent additional reading books home for the Summer - I firmly believe that the holidays should be a time of switching off and relaxation but I also believe that reading can, and should be, a part of that relaxation and enjoyment for children. Please make reading a part of your child's holiday... read with them, read the newspaper, read comics, read takeaway menus, read, read and then read some more - it's the foundation of education and a key indicator of future success. Please see the Accelerated Reader update to see just how well we've done as a school this year; we don't want that to slip in the summer!*

*School staff sincerely hope all our families enjoy a restful, happy break. We are excited to continue our journey together in the new academic year as we work towards becoming a primary school, building on our strong sense of community and collaboration. Thank you once again for your support. Have a wonderful summer!*

### **Staffing Update**



Mrs Howie popped into school this week, and it was lovely to see her, the children were thrilled and are really looking forward to her coming back. While her treatment has stabilised her condition, she will need some further treatment which means she won't be able to return to work in September. However, we are hopeful that she will be able to rejoin us before the end of the calendar year. We, as always, all wish her the very best for her ongoing recovery and we will support her however we can when she is ready to return. In the meantime, we welcome Jenny Wright to the team and she will pick up Mrs Howie's teaching commitment from September.

#### **Hello from Ms Wright!**

*Hi everyone! My name is Ms Wright and I am really excited to come to your school! I am moving back up North in the Summer holidays to be closer to my family and I am thrilled to be joining such a welcoming school community. I have worked in education for seven years and taught in both the UK and abroad. Wherever I go, I love making learning fun, interactive and all about you! I can't wait to get to know you all and start our learning adventure together.*

As planned, Ms Gilbert will leave us on Friday to take up her new post at Hipsburn Primary School. We are all so proud of her and congratulate her on this next step in her career. Ms Gilbert has been such an asset to our team, and both staff and children will miss her greatly. We would have loved to keep her here if we had a role available but we wish her every success and happiness in her new job - keep being amazing Keziah!

One further staffing change to announce is that Mrs Wakenshaw has accepted a post at Tweedmouth West. We are so sad to see her go and she is incredibly emotional about leaving us (there's been lots of tears). She has been with the school for 13 years and has contributed so much, to so many for so long. In particular, her work with supporting children (and adults) with their emotional wellbeing has been really valued. We, of course, wish her all the best in her new role, but will miss her dearly - particularly at those special times of year where she always steps up and takes a lead - residential visits and Maypole preparations being just two. We know this is short notice and we are frantically trying to think of ways to appropriately acknowledge and recognise the massive impact she has had on our school.

From a headteacher's point of view, I want to say a massive thank you to the staff for their support and teamwork this year. As a school, we are blessed to have such a dedicated, hardworking, committed and caring team. Please see page 2 for a staffing overview for September.

# Staffing Overview for September 2025

<i>Early Years and Key Stage 1</i>		<i>Key Stage 2</i>	
<i>Reception (Oak Class)</i>	<i>Years 1&amp;2 (Cherry Class)</i>	<i>Years 3&amp;4 (Beech Class)</i>	<i>Year 5 (Sycamore Class)</i>
<b>Staff</b> Miss Carr Mrs Rawlings	<b>Staff</b> Mrs Wright (then Mrs Howie) Mrs Logan	<b>Staff</b> Mrs Burn	<b>Staff</b> Mr Roberts Miss Fleet
<b>Room</b> Oak Class	<b>Room</b> Cherry Class & Oak Class (flexibility for year 1)	<b>Room</b> Beech Class (upstairs)	<b>Room</b> Sycamore Class (downstairs)

## School Council

We are very excited to introduce our newly sworn-in Student Council representatives for Year Groups 1 to 4! These enthusiastic young leaders have been carefully selected to help represent student voices across the school. The Student Council plays an important role in sharing ideas, organising activities, and working together to make positive changes. As we head into the new academic year, Mrs Logan will lead the school council to focus on improving our school's environmental impact and exploring creative ways to enhance school life. We also have a suggestion box in school, which has already sparked some exciting topics that the council looks forward to discussing further next term. Our school councillors are; Jack, Calvin, Riley, Elizabeth, Olivia, Amelie, Natasha and Josie.



## Safeguarding

We consider safeguarding to be the most important thing that we do in school. We want to make sure that all our families also stay safe in the holidays. We are an Operation Encompass school and an Operation Endeavour school and the school safeguarding team will still check emails in the holidays. More information about these initiatives can be found on the safeguarding section of the schools website:

<http://www.ford.northumberland.sch.uk/web/safeguarding/182420>

We hope you have found the weekly 'Wake up Wednesday' information on Seesaw to be useful. In particular, the Water Safety from this week is part of our contextual safeguarding information.

Please let us know if there are specific concerns that, as parents, you would like more information about. As always, any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children should be directed to Mr Roberts.



# ATTENDANCE

	% Attendance
Reception (Oak)	95%
Year 1 (Cherry)	95.8%
Year 2 (Cherry)	95.7%
Year 3 (Beech)	94.3%
Year 4 (Beech)	94.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94.9%</b>

We are committed to providing every pupil with the best possible start in life. As we reach the end of another fantastic year, I want to take a moment to celebrate one of our key achievements together – our excellent attendance record. Thank you to every pupil, parent, and member of staff who has made regular attendance a priority this year.

### Why does attendance matter?

Attending school every day ensures our children make the most of their learning opportunities, develop friendships, and feel part of our school community.

National research shows that:

- Pupils with high attendance are more likely to achieve strong academic results.
- Attendance has close ties to pupil attainment, even in the early primary school days. Pupils who attend school nearly every day in Year 6 are 1.3 times more likely to meet the Government's expected standards in reading, writing and maths
- Missing just 2 days a month can add up to 18 days over a school year – that's nearly four weeks of lost learning.
- Good attendance is linked to better wellbeing and social development.

Our results this year:

Our average attendance was 94.9% which is above the national average for a primary school. All of our classes had above 94% attendance (the Government's target is 95%).

Nine of our pupils had attendance above 98% – a fantastic achievement (a notable mention also to Adam who is our only Centurion with 100% attendance).

Let's keep it up - we beat the average but we consider ourselves to be so much better than average! As we look ahead to next year, let's continue working together to ensure that every pupil attends school every day (unless they are genuinely unwell). Every lesson counts, and together we can give our children the very best start.



## IMPORTANT DATES FOR NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

**Teacher Training Days—Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September 2025**

**Return to School for the children - Wednesday 3rd September 2025**

**Afternoon Golf at Goswick (Years, 3,4 & 5) - Wednesday 24th September 2025**

**October Half Term - Monday 27th October 2025**

**Christmas Holiday - Monday 22nd December 2025**

**Teacher Training Day - Monday 5th January 2026**

**February Half Term - Monday 16th February 2026**

**Easter Holiday - Friday 3rd April 2026**

**May Day Bank Holiday - Monday 4th May 2026**

**May Half Term - Monday 25th May 2026**

**Summer Holidays - Monday 20th July 2026**

During the two teacher training days in September we will try to map out the rest of the academic year in terms of important dates (Parents' consultation, Sports Day, May Day etc etc) and then we will communicate them to you at the earliest possible opportunity. We know that giving information early is one of the things that parents have requested and we're mindful of how beneficial that is for our families in terms of planning.

## Reading Successes - Accelerated Reader and Phonics

*This academic year, we have placed a strong emphasis on the successful teaching of reading, and this commitment will remain a central focus for us in the coming year.*

*The teaching of reading in primary schools is crucial—not only for academic achievement but also for each child's future life chances. Research from the National Literacy Trust shows that children who enjoy reading and read well are five times more likely to have above-average levels of mental wellbeing than their peers who don't. According to the Department for Education, pupils who struggle with reading at age 11 are significantly less likely to achieve good GCSEs, reducing their future employment prospects and life opportunities.*

*To ensure the best outcomes for our pupils, we assessed all children at the start and end of this year using the Star Reader assessment, which is linked to Accelerated Reader. We are extremely proud to share that our children, on average, have made 15 months' progress in reading across a 10-month assessment window. This significant progress demonstrates the impact of our targeted provision and the dedication of both our staff and pupils—who truly 'love learning'.*

*A particular highlight is Lewis, who made an incredible 29 months' progress in reading within just 10 months—an outstanding achievement that reflects his hard work. Another notable success is that Olivia managed to read over 100 books on the Accelerated Reader scheme - quite some dedication.*

*This fantastic progress in reading sits alongside our very strong Phonics Test Results. We expect that 89% of our Year 1 pupils will have passed the National Phonics Screening Check this year, well above the national average of 80%. This further evidences the effectiveness of our approach and the positive learning environment at our school.*

*We are immensely proud of these outcomes, which reflect improvements in our reading provision and the ongoing hard work and enthusiasm of our pupils. We are reaching out to families to try and make sure this progress carries on in the holidays (often there is attainment regression across the 6-week holidays).*

*Recently, in school, Wooler Library came into share their Summer Reading Challenge and this would be a great way to keep enthusiasm for reading alive in the Summer holidays - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2718505371767062/posts/4003078463309740/>*

*As a commitment to ensuring reading carries on over the holidays, we'll ask children to bring home some additional reading books - quizzes on Accelerated Reader can still be accessed in the Summer and we'll have two awards in September (most books read and most words read). As mentioned in the newsletter introduction, it doesn't matter if children read or are they are read to by an adult, it doesn't matter what is being read. Language immersion is key to future success. Happy Reading!*

## Music Provision

Next year, we are pleased that Nic will continue to come into school for her peripatetic music lessons. As one of our steps for development, we have worked with Nic to broaden our school offer.

Therefore, we are delighted to have Xennon Easton coming into school next year to teach Drums and Guitar. Xennon is a professional musician who has music available on Spotify - a celebrity (but he does not like to admit it). He has already been into school to meet some of our children - Oak class had lots of fun with their short percussion-drumming lesson.

If your child is interested in guitar or drum lessons then please let us know (contact the school office). We know what a positive force music is in the lives of our children and we are excited to expand our music teaching offer.



## Consideration about Costs

As a small school, we are committed to keeping costs for our families as low as possible and to ensure that our families receive the best possible value. As mentioned in the last newsletter, due to ongoing financial pressures, we have been forced to review the costs associated with school dinners and school trips (including swimming). Just as a reminder, from September, school dinners will increase in price to £2.50.



The cost of swimming will remain the same as this is subsidised by our Sports funding. We will have to consider, as the year goes on, the cost of other educational visits. For transparency, when informing parents of the voluntary contributions, we will share the total cost of the trip.

We want to assure you that we are very mindful of the cost of living crisis affecting many families. The upcoming changes have been carefully considered and have only been made because they are absolutely necessary. We have concerns around your financial situation - we may be able to offer further help in specific circumstances.

## Sports Day and Summer Fayre

The school grounds were filled with sunshine excitement as we held our annual Sports Day (we were so lucky with the glorious weather) followed by a fantastic Summer Fayre. It was a joy to see so many families coming together to support the children and enjoy the festivities.

### Thank You to Our BBQ Heroes

A huge thank you to Anne and Claire for organising the BBQ. The delicious food was the highlight of the afternoon for many, and we know just how much effort went into preparing, cooking, and serving everything. Your hard work made a real difference – thank you both for making it such a memorable treat in the sweltering heat!

### Sporting Spirit and Teamwork

We are incredibly grateful to Ms Gilbert for taking the lead on Sports Day. The children's effort, skill, and sportsmanship were outstanding, and it was wonderful to see everyone encouraging one another and doing their best. Well done to all our pupils for making us so proud and those brave parents who joined in the adult races at the end!

### PTA and the Summer Fayre

A special thank you goes to our PTA for their dedication in organising the Summer Fayre. It was a fantastic event, enjoyed by all – except perhaps Mr Roberts, who ended up soaked and covered in water, sand, and mud (which definitely wasn't part of the plan!). The PTA's creativity and enthusiasm helped create a brilliant day for everyone, we're so grateful.

### Fundraising Success

We're delighted to share that the money raised from the fayre and BBQ will go towards building up our funds to replace the iPads in school, which will soon need updating. Your generosity and support play a vital role in ensuring our pupils have access to the best resources. Thank You, Families!

We truly appreciate your involvement and the kind words we've received about how much fun everyone had. Events like these remind us what a special community we have. Thank you again to everyone who helped, participated, and joined us in making the day such a success!



### Laptop Donation - Thanks to True Potential

This month, we were very grateful to receive 10 new laptops as a donation from True Potential in Newcastle. True Potential offer financial advice and are based in Newcastle, we thank them for their very generous donation. They were upgrading their own technology and therefore very kindly donated their 'old' laptops to us. This is just one of the creative ways that, as a school, we are working to try and ensure that we use our finances as carefully as possible so that we can provide the best quality education for our children. True Potential made a short video, which is on LinkedIn, to show the day they visited to hand over the laptops:



[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/true-potential-llp\\_last-month-we-proudly-donated-laptops-to-activity-7350828595411410945-XGrI](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/true-potential-llp_last-month-we-proudly-donated-laptops-to-activity-7350828595411410945-XGrI)