

# NewsLetter

December 2025

## Welcome

Welcome to the December edition of our Trust newsletter for parents, carers and our wider community.

Since our last newsletter, we have had three schools join our Trust, Cleves Cross Primary School, Rosa Street Primary School and, most recently, Hutton Henry CofE Primary School. I am delighted to offer a warm welcome to the pupils, staff and families of all three schools. With their additions, our Trust has now grown again, serving almost 2,700 pupils across 4 local authorities.

This term has passed incredibly quickly and has been filled with a wealth of fantastic experiences across our schools. As the festive season approaches, it has been a joy to see the range of Christmas activities taking place, from nativity performances and carol services to Christmas fairs and craft sessions. Visiting schools in recent weeks, I have been struck by the wonderful atmosphere and the excitement building as we head towards the end of term.

As always, this newsletter highlights just a snapshot of the numerous opportunities for children across our schools this term and the positive impact these activities have. I'm sure you'll share my appreciation for the staff. They make events like these happen, in addition to the high quality education and care they provide to your children each and every day.

I would also like to thank you for the continued support you give to our schools, particularly at this busy time of year, and for taking the time to support school events over recent weeks.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Best wishes,  
Mr R Ward, CEO



## Our Schools



Abbey Infant and Junior Schools



Cleves Cross Primary School



Easington CE Primary School



Esh CE Primary School



Greatham CE Primary School



High Coniscliffe CE Primary School



Prior's Mill CE Primary School



Rosa Street Primary School



St Hild's College Primary School



St Mary's Cockerton Primary School



Wynyard CE Primary School



Welcome to our newest school, Hutton Henry CofE Primary School, who joined us on 1st December 2025.

# Hutton Henry



## A warm welcome to Hutton Henry CofE Primary School!

Hutton Henry Primary School, based in the village of Hutton Henry in County Durham, joined Melrose Learning Trust on 1st December.

### Our Kindness Committee

The Kindness Committee at Hutton Henry, whose members are shown in the photo below, have recently been collecting donations for Darlington Memorial Hospital's Christmas Toy Appeal. One of the committee members spent some time in hospital over the summer, so when the committee met to decide on their Christmas appeal, she suggested a toy appeal as she could empathise with how the children would feel if they were in hospital over Christmas.

With courageous advocacy in our minds, the committee thought about how they could include the wider community in their collection. After launching the appeal in collective worship and sharing the reasons for the appeal, we have advertised our appeal on the Hutton Henry Hub Facebook page and had a collection point in the local pub so that the community could join the appeal too.





# Abbey Infants and Juniors



## Year 6 Enterprise Project

Our Year 6 children showcased incredible entrepreneurial skills during their recent Enterprise Project. Starting with just £5, they designed and created beautiful Christmas decorations and delicious festive treats to sell.

Not only did they have a fantastic time, but they also made an impressive profit to be spent later in the year! Their creativity, teamwork, and business sense truly shone through.

This project was part of the Make £5 Grow programme, which gives children a taste of what it's like to set up and run a mini-business. Through this experience, the children have learned valuable life skills such as teamwork, organisation, problem-solving, and financial confidence, skills that will help them succeed later in life. They've explored budgeting, marketing, and planning, all while having fun and taking ownership of their ideas.

We are so proud of our budding entrepreneurs, what an amazing achievement!



## UNICEF UK Gold Award

We are delighted to share that Cleves Cross Primary and Nursery School has once again been awarded Gold by UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools programme – the highest accolade available. This award recognises schools that place children's rights at the heart of their ethos, policies, and practice, creating a community where rights are learned, respected, and promoted every day. Gold status demonstrates a deep and sustained commitment to these principles across all aspects of school life.

Cleves Cross has been working with UNICEF UK since 2010, achieving Silver in 2011 and Gold since 2016. Our recent re-accreditation confirms that children's rights remain firmly embedded in everything we do, positively impacting our whole school community.

As part of our ongoing commitment, we hold dedicated Rights Respecting events, including a themed morning in the autumn and a full week in the spring. This term, pupils explored Articles 2, 8, and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, focusing on equality, identity, and inclusion for children with disabilities. Activities were enriched through high-quality texts and collaborative team work.

We are proud to share our Rights Respecting journey with the wider community and continue to champion children's rights in all areas of school life.

Congratulations to everyone at Cleves Cross for maintaining Gold status and ensuring children's rights remain at the heart of our school!





# Easington CE



## Choir Visit to Nursing Home

Easington C of E Primary School Choir brought festive spirit to our community this half term with a special visit to the local residential and nursing home.

Bursting with excitement, the children filled the halls with joyful melodies, from classic carols to cheerful Christmas favourites. Residents and staff alike were delighted by the performance, many joining in with smiles, singing, and even a little dancing from their seats.

The visit was a heart-warming reminder of how small acts of kindness can make a big difference. Our pupils truly embraced the idea of “spreading Christmas cheer by singing loud for all to hear,” sharing warmth, laughter, and connection across generations.

The choir left the home glowing with pride, already looking forward to future visits that help strengthen the bond between our school and the wider community.





# Esh CE



## Residential to Ford Castle

Children at Esh recently enjoyed a brilliant residential visit to Ford Castle in Northumberland. It was a fantastic trip near the English/Scottish border, based in a real castle! It was amazing to see children pushing themselves to their limits, working together and building resilience while trying new experiences. The activities included zipline, fencing, climbing up Jacob's Ladder, adventure trails and abseiling off a bridge!

It was a great bonding experience for children and staff at the beginning of the year and has set them up well for the challenges ahead. It was great to hear centre staff complimenting the children on their manners and behaviour, as they once again proved to be superb ambassadors for our school.





# Greatham CE



Greatham  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
Primary School

## Robinwood Residential

Year 5 and 6 pupils at Greatham CE Primary School have recently returned from their residential to Robinwood Outdoor Activity Centre.

The staff who accompanied the children on the visit were incredibly proud of them all! They tackled every challenge with courage, supported their friends through each activity, and encouraged each other to have a go and keep going. Most importantly, they showed incredible kindness and teamwork throughout the trip. What a fantastic group of children!





# High Coniscliffe

## SIAMS Celebrations



We are delighted to share the outcome of our recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS). The inspection explored how well our school is living up to its foundation as a Church school, and we were thrilled that we received a Judgement 1 (J1) outcome — the highest possible under the current SIAMS framework.

The inspector found that our school “is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.”

The report highlights how our Christian vision, ‘I can do all things,’ (Philippians 4:13) is deeply embedded across school life, shaping our relationships, priorities, and sense of community. It praises the inspirational leadership across the school, our strong focus on wellbeing and inclusion, and the meaningful collective worship that brings our community together. The inspector also commends the way our RE curriculum helps pupils enjoy learning about a wide range of religious and non-religious worldviews. The report is a wonderful celebration of our community and all that we strive to achieve together.

We are incredibly proud that the report recognises the deep sense of belonging, care, and purpose that runs throughout our school and that the inspector recognised the character and enthusiasm of our wonderful children, who live out our vision each day. This outcome reflects the dedication of our staff, the support of our governors and trust, and the partnership we share with our parents and carers.





# Prior's Mill



## Remembrance Sunday

On Remembrance Sunday, Prior's Mill's Head Girl, Ava, and Deputy Head Boy, Hendrix, laid a wreath on behalf of the school at the remembrance service in Billingham. They did an amazing job and we are very proud of them.

We also wish to say a massive thank you to Mrs Baron for organising and providing the wreath on the school's behalf.





# Rosa Street

## Elf Trail Project



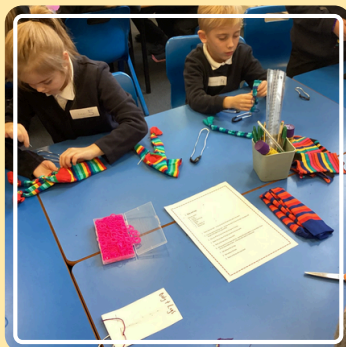
**Rosa Street**  
Primary School  
Learning together

Year 3 pupils at Rosa Street recently took part in a project with Spennymoor Town Council to create an Elf Trail throughout the Town over the festive period to try and encourage more people to shop locally.

Pupils began work in the first session by using their cutting, sewing and gluing skills alongside local artists to create their Christmas Elves.

During the second session pupils in Year 3 and 4 had fun making Christmas crackers which held information about the trail for them to take home to their families.

The Elves were then placed in different locations around the town so that all children across school could complete the trail. The project has been a great way of engaging with the local community and supporting lots of great local retailers in our town.





# St Hild's



## Festive Activities

Here at St Hild's we have been enjoying lots of festive activities.

Our Open the Book volunteers from St Giles Church led Collective Worship with the help of Browne Class. Year 2 children enjoyed a visit to the Christmas Journey at Carrville Methodist Church and our Reception children sang for the community at Durham Baptist Church.

As part of our ongoing partnership with Ushaw College, Durham, we created festive images to reflect the true meaning of Christmas. Our completed artwork is on display at Ushaw as part of their Christmas at Ushaw celebration.

We all enjoyed our school Christmas dinner, a Santa Run and a music concert to showcase and celebrate all our wonderful work in our music lessons.





# St Mary's Cockerton



## Nursery Opening

We were thrilled to announce the opening of our brand-new nursery for 3- and 4-year-olds in September!

The excitement began the moment refurbishment work started in June—so much so that our older children joined in by making and selling bookmarks to raise money for nursery reading books.

At the beginning of September, we celebrated this milestone with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony led by our oldest pupil, alongside our local ward councillor and school governor, our Local Authority EYFS Advisory Teacher and our wonderful nursery team.

This achievement is the result of incredible hard work, and it has been a joy to see our youngest learners explore the new areas and resources!

Their performance of 'The Littlest Nativity' with their friends from Reception was just wonderful!



We are welcoming 6 more children in January as our nursery continues to grow for our school community!



## Making a Difference

Our Year 6 Making a Difference Club has been a huge success this term with our dedicated members taking part in a range of projects to positively impact the school community, the local community and more widely too. The projects were all the children's own ideas based on how they felt they could make a difference to others.

Some of the projects included: making birthday cards for each resident of the local care home; teaching our Early Years pupils about road safety; and organising a Macmillan coffee morning where they sold the treats they had made. Their latest project was making Christmas cards for the staff and residents of the care home to spread some festive cheer.

