



Coxhoe Communicator

October 2025



Dear Parents and Carers,

As autumn term is well underway, we're reflecting on a fantastic first half term here at Coxhoe Primary School. The children have worked incredibly hard, showing great enthusiasm and resilience in their learning. They've certainly earned a well-deserved rest!

Our Harvest Festival was a truly special occasion. Children from Year 1 to Year 6 took part in a joyful celebration, sharing songs and reflections on the importance of gratitude and giving. We were deeply moved by the overwhelming kindness of our families who donated so generously to our local food pantry. Your support makes a real difference, and we are so grateful.

A huge thank you to St Mary's church for their wonderful welcome, their hospitality helped make the event even more memorable.

A special shout-out to our Year 1 families who joined in the Conkers Challenge! We had so much fun with the children exploring, counting and creating with conkers. It was a brilliant way to celebrate the season and enjoy learning together.

The next half term is always a busy one, filled with exciting events and festive preparations. Please keep an eye on the calendar and the school app for updates, key dates and important information.

Thank you for your continued support and for being such an important part of our school community. We wish you all a restful and enjoyable half term break.

Warm regards

Mrs. Bartle



Reception 2026 Open Evening

If you know families with children due to start school in September 2026, please let them know about our Open Evening on Monday 18th November at 5:15pm. It's a great opportunity to meet staff, explore our learning environment and discover what makes Coxhoe Primary so special.

Jewellery

Children are not permitted to wear earrings for school. This is due to Health and Safety guidelines and the active nature of school life for children. If your child has recently had their ears pierced, they may wear clear soft plastic piercing retainers. School has purchased some for emergency use only.

Music

We have had an incredible start to the year in music. Our children performed beautifully at Harvest Festival and their hard work certainly paid off.

Some of our children were also given the opportunity to join the North East Music Hub's Choir and perform as part of the Mercury Prize that has been held in Newcastle this year. They attended a rehearsal at St James' Park with other children from across the region before opening the event at the Tyneside Cinema and performing at Newcastle Central Station. This was an amazing opportunity for the children involved and we are very proud of everything they have achieved. The choir has been featured on the news and as a segment on the One Show as well.

While this has been going on, the rest of our choir have been preparing for submitting our entry into the Durham Music Service's Choir Competition of the year. They sound amazing and we are hoping that we will get through to the next round.



Halloween disco

We had a *spooktacular* time at our Halloween Disco this half term! The children looked absolutely amazing in their fabulous costumes. From creepy creatures to creative characters, the effort was outstanding. There was plenty of dancing, games and laughter. It was wonderful to see everyone enjoying themselves.

A huge thank you to all our parents and carers for your contributions and a special shout-out to our amazing PTA for their hard work in organising such a fun and successful event. Not only did the children have a brilliant time, it was also a great fundraising opportunity for our school.



Uniform Reminder

As we start the new school year, we'd like to remind all families to check our school website for the correct uniform expectations. We've worked hard to ensure our uniform is practical, affordable and reflective of our strong family ethos. We are very appreciative of the support from parents/carers; our Coxhoe family are looking so smart. If you have any spare uniform that is still in good condition but children have grown out of, we would very much appreciate the donations, especially PE T shirts and hoodies. Please send into school with your children or drop off at the school office.

Footwear:

Please remember that trainers worn for school should be **all black** with no coloured logos or details.

Active Play – ALL BLACK TRAINERS were included as an option at the last school uniform review to support our active curriculum; please ensure trainers worn as part of school uniform are all black (this excludes PE days).

PE Kit:

Our PE kit is an important part of the school uniform and should be worn as outlined on the website.

Support for SEND:

If your child has SEND and you need support with uniform requirements, please don't hesitate to get in touch - we're here to help.

Thank you for your continued support in helping all students feel proud and ready to learn each day.

Y4 Trip—Spennymoor

Year 4 had a brilliant time visiting Spennymoor Town Hall! They explored the Mining Museum, where they got to see lots of interesting artefacts and learn about what life was like in the mining community.

They also found out about Norman Cornish, a famous local artist and were really inspired by his work. Then, the children had fun creating their own murals, showing off their creativity and what they'd learned.



School Bags

Could we politely remind parents/carers that children must use a book bag style bag for school as bags are stored in trays due to very limited storage. Children in Year 6 may bring a backpack or larger bag as they bring additional items of equipment to school and have a designated storage area.

Artsmark update

The arts continue to be an integral part of our curriculum here at Coxhoe and we love to celebrate them in many ways from performances, to sharing of work and collaborating on projects. As we work towards our Artsmark award, we would love your help. If any parents/carers work within the arts sector, we would love to hear about it and share this with our children. Please get in touch if this is something you are able to support us with.

Hello Yellow Day

On Friday October 11th, we proudly took part in Hello Yellow Day to raise awareness for World Mental Health Day and show our support for young people's mental health. Students and staff came dressed in bright yellow clothing and accessories and the school was a sea of positivity and kindness, reminding us all that we're not alone and that mental health matters.



Activators

Our Indoor Activators have been doing a brilliant job encouraging their classmates to stay active throughout the school day. During their weekly training sessions with Mr Varty, they've been developing a fantastic collection of active break ideas to keep everyone moving and motivated. They are also continuing to track their class's total active minutes each day, with many classes regularly meeting – and even exceeding – the 30 active minutes target! It's great to see how committed everyone is to staying fit, focused, and full of energy – they are all eager to win the golden trainer for the most active minutes!

Our Outdoor Activators have made a fantastic start to their new role this half term! During their training sessions with Mr Varty, they have been learning how to lead fun and inclusive playground games that get everyone moving. Together, they've created a timetable of exciting activities to run each day, helping to make break times active, enjoyable and full of energy. It's been wonderful to see them growing in confidence as leaders and encouraging their peers to join in.

Tolkien Museum

Tolkien have kicked off this year's class museums with great success! The children were very excited about sharing their learning with their grown ups and were very keen to test their knowledge too. A huge thank you to all the parents/carers who attended the morning or afternoon session - it was a huge success thanks to your support and the hard work of the children! Mr Mason and Mr Hopson were blown away by their enthusiasm and couldn't have been happier with how both sessions went.

Year 3 Trip- Beamish Museum

Year 3 are really looking forward to their trip to Beamish Museum. We are going to explore all areas of museum and also take part in a mining workshop, where we will learn all about how mining explosions and disasters happened. The children have really enjoyed their history unit on Mining this term and can't wait to learn more on this fantastic visit!

Homework Update – Supporting Balance and Learning

At Coxhoe Primary School, we are always keen to review and improve all aspects of school life and homework is no exception. Over recent years, we've listened carefully to feedback from both families and our children and worked closely with staff to reflect on our approach. Alongside current educational research, we've taken time to consider how homework can best support our children's learning while also promoting a healthy balance in life.

We know how important it is for children to have time to enjoy hobbies, relax and spend quality time with family. We also recognise that homework can sometimes create pressure for families. With this in mind, we've refined our homework expectations to focus on the essentials — helping children build strong foundations in:

- Reading (regular reading at home makes a huge difference!)
- Basic number skills (such as number bonds, times tables and mental maths)

These core skills support progress across the curriculum and are most effective when practiced regularly in short bursts.

We kindly ask for your continued support in encouraging your child to complete the tasks set. Your involvement makes a real difference and together we can help every child thrive both in and out of school.

Year 5 Pulse Sessions

Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed their visit from performing arts company PULSE, where they learned contemporary dance. The workshop started by investigating scientific themes, our relationship with space, light and sky and then the children used what they had learned to represent different planets, before putting them together to create a routine. At the end, Year 5 were thrilled to have the opportunity to watch a fantastic performance that included the moves they had learned and used lighting, screens and music to tell a story. We were all on the edge of our seats!

Pupil Voice

Our School Council have been working extremely hard to come up with creative and exciting ideas to fundraise for new equipment on the playground. The Mini Police are getting settled into their new roles and they have supported the Halloween Disco for the KS1 and Reception children. The Inclusion Squad have supported Mrs Duffy in the Black History Month assembly. Well done to our Pupil Voice groups for working so hard this month!

Residential Visits

We look forward to another year full of exciting and enriching opportunities for our children both in the classroom and beyond. We hope you have looked at the information about educational visits and are able to help school provide these amazing opportunities for our children. The visits for our children this year are:

Year 5: Weardale Adventures	Wednesday 5 th November – Friday 7 th November
Year 4: Beamish	Thursday 19 th March – Friday 20 th March
Year 6: London	Monday 22 nd June – Wednesday 24 th June
Year 3: Camping outdoors adventure	Monday 6 th July – Tuesday 7 th July
Year 2: Late night stay	Friday 10 th July

Don't forget the deadline for the Weardale Residential is the 31st October.

Lates

We understand school mornings are a hectic time of the day but, to minimise interruption to lessons, all children need to arrive at school between 8:40-8:55. Gates do close promptly at 8:55 and children arriving after this time will need to be dropped off at the main entrance. If you are running late, please contact the school office to inform us of this. If you are struggling with morning routines please contact Miss Armstrong, family liaison, for support.

Attendance

We kindly remind you of the importance of notifying the school if your child will be absent. To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, please call the school office before **9:00 AM** on the day of the absence. **This is part of our school policy, if we are unable to contact you we may need to conduct a home visit.**

Early notification allows us to accurately record attendance and promptly follow up on any unexplained absences. If we do not hear from you, we will need to contact you to confirm your child's whereabouts. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school community safe and informed.

Art Update

Exciting news for all our art enthusiasts!

We are delighted to announce that visiting artist, Zoe Robinson, will be joining us on 12th November. She will be working with a group of children from year 6 who have a real passion for art and design.

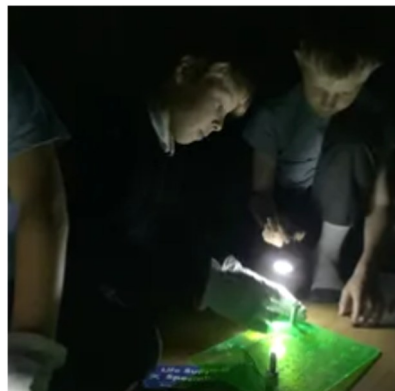
Together, they will be creating symbolic wire bird sculptures, with each bird representing a different area of the curriculum. Our Art Ambassadors have been busy this week developing creative ideas to support our artistic vision.

I cannot wait to see the incredible final pieces!

If you'd like to see some of Zoe Robinson's work, check out her recent collection on show at the Biscuit Factory <https://www.thebiscuitfactory.com/collections/zoe-robinson>

Planetarium

The Year 5 children were visited by a team of scientists from the Life Science Centre in Newcastle. They brought with them a huge planetarium and the children experienced space exploration as we travelled to the moon together. They had to work together and use their problem solving skills to help the rocket return to Earth. The children had a great time and loved spending the time in the planetarium. We are very excited to be continuing this project with the Life Science Centre this year and look forward to meeting a scientist next term.



Restart a heart day

KS2 proudly took part in Restart a Heart Day, a nationwide initiative aimed at teaching life-saving CPR skills to young people. These were hands-on workshops designed to build confidence and competence in responding to cardiac emergencies. We're incredibly proud of our children for embracing this challenge and showing such enthusiasm.

A huge thank you to our visiting trainers, staff and children who made the day a success!



SEND

SEND Update

This week sees our termly support plan review meetings begin with parents and carers. Appointments will continue after our half-term break and if you have not received your invitation to your appointment yet, it will arrive soon to give you sufficient notice to attend. Your support plan review is a vital part of discussing your child's progress and we highly value and appreciate your input to help shape their next steps.

SEND Webpage

Please check out our school **SEND webpage** at the Coxhoe Primary website for upcoming events, news and links to support in and around our local area.

SEND Coffee Afternoon

Thank you to everyone who attended this term's SEND Coffee Afternoon here at school. These are fantastic opportunities for our SEND Team to get to know you better and for families to share advice, support and a cup of tea and coffee to help us build a wonderful community which focusses on helping those with additional needs. We hope to see you again and continue to build this amazing network of parents and carers.

SEND Question of the Month: How is progress monitored for children receiving SEND support?

At Coxhoe Primary School, we carefully monitor the progress of all children, including those receiving SEND support, to make sure every child is developing and thriving. Class teachers regularly assess learning through everyday classwork, observations and formal assessments. This helps them identify what is going well and where extra help may be needed. The SEND Team also works closely with staff to review progress, look at assessment data and observe children in class to ensure that support strategies are effective.

Each term, we hold SEND Support Plan review meetings with parents and carers, the class teacher and the SENDCO. These meetings give us a chance to discuss progress, celebrate achievements and agree on the next steps or any changes to support. For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), there is also a formal annual review. This is a detailed meeting involving parents, staff and any relevant professionals to look at progress towards long-term outcomes and update the plan where needed.

Our aim is to work together with families so that every child with SEND receives the right support to make steady, meaningful progress — both academically and personally.

Leave of absence forms

Leave of absence forms can be found on our school website for you to complete. They are also available from the school office. Please note if you wish to submit a leave of absence form, it must be completed **4 weeks before** the said absence and both parents need to sign the form. If your child is attending an event we would kindly ask you provide evidence of this at the same time you submit the leave of absence form.

Although parents/carers may feel leave of absence forms could be declined, we still require the form to be completed as it is a requirement from the local authority.

Family Hubs come to Coxhoe!

We're happy to announce that Family Hubs will be joining us at this term's Parents Evening! Whether you're looking for advice, activities, or just a chat, Family Hubs are here to help with:

- Parenting support and guidance
- Local services and community groups
- Health and wellbeing resources
- Fun activities for children and families

This is a brilliant opportunity for families!

Bonfire Safety Talk for Year 5 and Year 6 Pupils

On Friday 24th October in the lead-up to Bonfire Night, we're pleased to share that County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) will be visiting our school to deliver a Bonfire Safety Talk to our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.

This short session is designed to help our children understand how to enjoy Bonfire Night safely while being aware of the potential dangers. It's a valuable opportunity for our pupils to learn directly from fire safety professionals and to ask questions in a supportive environment.

We're grateful to CDDFRS for offering this important enrichment activity and helping to keep our children safe.

First Aid—Important Information

As you are aware, you will receive an email notification from Medical Tracker if your child receives first aid; this includes bumped heads. In the case of a bumped head, the class teacher will also speak with you to ensure you have received the notification at the end of the school day. We will telephone children in Y5-6 who walk home independently, before the end of the school day so that you can advise us if you wish them to be collected/continue to walk independently.

Please note, that in more severe cases where first aiders advise parents to seek medical advice, they will contact parents/carers soon after the incident.



Treats from home

Children are welcome to bring treats in to school to share with their friends for a Birthday or other celebration but we kindly ask that you send in individually wrapped items that have a clear ingredients list. Please also remember that we are a nut free school.

PE

It has been fantastic to see the children's energy and enthusiasm in PE this half term! They have enjoyed developing their invasion games and gymnastics skills, showing great teamwork, creativity and determination in every lesson. It's been wonderful to hear children reflect on how they can challenge themselves and improve their performances week by week. Don't forget to visit our class pages and the PE webpage to see some of our amazing skills in action! Our football team has represented the school brilliantly in the Go Well football league and football cup, demonstrating excellent sportsmanship and teamwork. A huge well done to everyone who has taken part – we are really proud of your efforts! After half term, we're looking forward to the start of the Go Well netball league. Training will begin soon with Mr Todd at lunchtime.

Y1 Washington Wetlands Visit

Year 1 had a fantastic time during their visit to Washington Wetland Centre. The children enjoyed seeing the otters and flamingos being fed. They learned lots of new facts about them and had fun pond dipping and finding different minibeasts that live in ponds. The children also had a minibeast hunt and sorted them into legs and no legs. Year 1 were brilliant Coxhoe citizens all day, they were excellent listeners and we are super proud of them!

Safeguarding Reminders

- Our front door remains locked for security reasons. If you are inside the reception/office area, please do not open the door for other visitors. Only staff should open the door for any visitors.
- Please inform the school office IMMEDIATELY if you change any personal details such as mobile phone numbers and addresses. This includes additional contacts on your child's records such as grandparents.
- Please keep all medical information up to date and complete forms in a timely manner.
- We kindly ask parents to notify the school of any updates or changes to their child's dietary needs or health conditions to ensure we can provide the best possible care and support.
- Please ensure your child's inhaler is in date and there is one in school at all times. If your child has been diagnosed with asthma, kindly inform the school office so that Miss Armstrong can assist you in completing the necessary documentation.



Music Lessons

For the children in Key Stage 2, there are opportunities for them to learn a musical instrument. Please find more information below.

Would your child like to be a Durham Music Service Star?

High quality music lessons are available now in school. You can choose from:

- Strings with Miss Brookes on Mondays
- Woodwind with Mrs Unwin on Tuesdays
- Brass with Mr Bradshaw on Tuesdays

Register for Instrumental lessons #JoinInDMS

Durham Music Service believes that every young person who learns to play and sing with us is a DMS Star from the very beginning. Our approach to learning is all about progress through fun and engagement and to give everyone the skills and experience for a lifelong enjoyment of playing and singing.

- Specialist face-to-face lessons in groups during school time
- Access to a wide range of resources to extend your child's learning at home
- Certificates of Achievement
- Access to external examinations
- Opportunities to celebrate music-making with performances in school and beyond

Find out more at durhammusic.org.uk and sign up today

BACK TO SCHOOL

Online Safety Tips for Children

Wow, it's September already! The month when autumn officially starts and ... oh yeah, the beginning of a new school year. Every cloud has a silver lining though! Another term means new friends to make, different stuff to learn, fresh online trends to jump on and exciting new games to play on your phone, computer or console. We've compiled a list of our top tips to ensure that - whether you're going online to chat, research things or just have fun - you can do it safely.

Be cautious with your profile

Be careful not to give out too much info on your social media or gaming profiles. Details like your full name, address or school's name could all help strangers to actually find you online. A trusted adult can help you make your profiles private - so only your family and actual friends can contact you.

Lock your devices

Taking your phone or tablet to school? Turn password protection on - it keeps your private info safe and stops anyone accessing your device without permission. Passwords should be memorable to you - but difficult for anyone else to guess. Get a trusted adult to write it down in case you forget it!

Be smart with screen time

Too much screen time, especially just before bed, can affect your quality of sleep. Losing sleep, or not sleeping well enough, messes with your concentration and energy levels. Try muting notifications so you don't get pinged late at night - you'll feel fresher and more focused the next day.

Know how to deal with bullies

Sadly there are people online who enjoy picking on other users. If you ever feel like you're being bullied online - by anyone, not just someone from school - talk to a trusted adult about it. Together, you can discuss possible steps, such as blocking or reporting the person who's targeting you.

Manage online relationships wisely

Most people in a relationship chat to their partner online. Just be mindful that once you send a pic or message (even if it's private), you no longer control who else might see it. Messaging someone you've never actually met - and who might not be who they say - is definitely best avoided.

React well to inappropriate content

When you're researching something online, there's always a chance of finding content that makes you feel uncomfortable or upset. If this happens, you can report it as inappropriate and (hopefully) get it taken down. Tell a trusted adult what happened: they'll help you decide what to do next.

Report offensive in-game chat

If you game online with your mates, you'll know things can get competitive and heated on the in-game chat. Playing against people you don't know (especially if they're older) raises the risk of offensive comments and even threats. Our advice? Find out how to block or mute those bad losers.

Learn to spot fake news

If you're looking into a topic for homework or a project, be careful not to get taken in by fake news: content that's deliberately created to mislead people. Check the story with credible sources, like the BBC or Sky News. Trust your instincts, too - if it seems too unbelievable to be true, it's probably fake.

Keep it 'real' with online friends

Everyone enjoys adding friends and followers on social media. It's important, though, that the people you interact with online really are your friends. If they're just random people you've connected with to increase your contacts, you don't know if they could be trolls or bullies (or worse).