



Southridge First School Whole School Newsletter February 2025



"Proud to Make a Positive Impact"

What's Inside

**Social Ambassador
Initiative**

**School Aims &
Priorities**

Parent Survey

Playtime Activities

**Healthy Eating:
School Dinners &
Packed Lunches**

Volunteers Needed

School Comms

Sponsored Fun Run

The outdoors offers limitless potential to young children. It becomes a place where they can go to relax their mind, to be inspired and to deep dive into the world of imagination. It's a place where they can design, create and explore. The possibilities are endless.

Angela Hanscom

School's Aims & Priorities

As outlined in the October newsletter, each year we have a number of development priorities that we focus on within school.

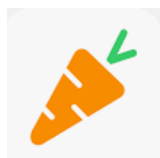
To this end, staff across school have been actively incorporating outdoor learning opportunities across the curriculum. These lessons are designed to deliver the objectives of our core and foundation subject plans while adapting the teaching to make full use of our lovely grounds. We have invested in a range of tools and teaching aids specifically designed to support and facilitate outdoor learning and the feedback from pupils is that they are thoroughly enjoying these enriched learning opportunities.

Children from Reception to Year 4 have been focusing on the learning of key number facts, including the speedy recall of multiplication facts for those children in Year 2-4. While younger children are using rekenreks as a means to develop addition and subtraction fluency, the older children are loving Times Tables Rockstars as a digital method of practising multiplication and division facts. This forms a clearly designed learning pathway to help children to achieve real fluency by the time they leave us at the end of Year 4.

We have continued our work Oracy 21, to help our pupils develop effective speaking and listening skills. Staff are seeing a marked improvement in children's ability to manage more sophisticated conversations and to use a variety of sentence stems to structure their thoughts when they are discussing topics.

As we endeavour to make Southridge First School an environment where everyone recognises the positive impact we can have on ourselves, others, our local community and the wider world, we are looking forward to our first Social Ambassador visits next term. Their aim is to identify ways in which their work or leisure activities positively impact a particular part of their community and world. They will be sharing some of their experiences with the children, setting them some challenges to achieve, and looking forward to hearing back from us later in the year to find out what we have achieved. Our ambassadors cover areas such as: The Environment; Our Local Community; Physical Wellbeing; and 'Equity and Inclusion' with more in the pipeline. Hopefully their **positive impact** will become apparent as the year progresses!

Healthy Eating



As anyone who is familiar with the work of Dr Chris van Tulleken (Cbeebies' Operation Ouch; author of 'Ultr-processed People') knows, the food we feed our children (and ourselves) has an impact on development, concentration and behaviour. To support our children with this, we have been working with Mellors, who supply our school dinners, to try and monitor the amount and quality of processed food that is served from the school kitchen. They are very keen to work with school to 'make' rather than 'buy-in' as much food as possible - maybe this is why Claire, our cook's, homemade pizza is so popular!

Can we please ask that those parents whose children bring a packed lunch to school also try to ensure that it is balanced and limits high-sugar, ultra-processed foods. There is a very helpful 'app' that can be installed on smart phones called 'Yuka' that allows you to scan the barcode of almost any bought foodstuff from the supermarket and gives you an instant idea as to whether it is a positive or addition to a child's packed lunch. Give it a try! [Link to Apple Store](#) [Link to Google Play](#)

School Comms



We will be leaving 'Teachers to Parents' after the half term holiday. After this point, we will only be using School Gateway as our communication method. School Gateway allows us to send short messages via their app (which you have been brilliant at installing on your devices - thank you) and also sends emails to your email address that is registered with school.

This means that when we have messages to share they will appear as alerts on your phone in the School Gateway app, and longer information will arrive via email.

Please remove the 'Teachers to Parents' app from your device as it will no longer be used for communications by Southridge First School.

Playtime Activities

During the winter months while the school playing field is unavailable at playtimes, the children make great use of the MUGA, yard, Butterfly Path, Garden and climbing frames. To safely manage their use, each year group has dedicated timetabled time in the MUGA and Climbing Frame areas. There are activities such as basketball and skipping on the yard, while the MUGA offers a safe space for the children to play football on their day. We do not allow the children to play football on the playground because while many of them are excellent at kicking the ball with real power, they have not yet developed the accuracy that prevents accidents occurring when our younger children get too close or a shot goes astray.

Volunteers Needed

We are looking forward to working with the local volunteering group Hope for Hedges who will be joining us on Monday 17th March (1-3pm) to help plant more hedging around the school boundary. If anyone is available to help, we would love to hear from you. Last year's event was a lovely combination of school and local community working together on a common aim.

We are also in the process of designing a nature pond to be installed in the Outdoor Learning Area, opposite the Year 1 classrooms. This will require some strong arms and backs to help dig out. We do not, as yet, have a date, but if you would be a willing volunteer to help (assuming no diary conflicts), then please let us know.

If you would like to volunteer for either hedge planting or pond digging, please email the school office (office@southridgefirst.org.uk) and let us know.

Parent Survey

Thank you to everyone who took the opportunity to feed back to school in the recent Parent Survey. We are thrilled at the kind support you offer and the positive feedback that was given. Please see the results below, and rest assured that we do analyse your written feedback to spot trends and themes to act upon.

	Strongly Agree / Agree	Strongly Disagree / Disagree	Don't know	Responses
My child is happy at school	98%	1%	1%	160
My child feels safe at school	98%	1%	1%	160
The school makes sure pupils are well behaved	95%	1%	4%	160
My child has been bullied at Southridge this year	4%	96%	n/a	160
The school dealt with bullying quickly and effectively	43%	7%	50%	14
School makes me aware of what my child is and will be learning during the year	98%	2%	0%	160
Concerns raised have been dealt with properly	83%	0%	17%	160
My child has SEND and school gives them the support they need to succeed	50%	6%	44%	16
School has high expectations for	94%	1%	6%	160

my child				
My child does well at school	97%	1%	3%	160
School lets me know how my child is doing	98%	2%	1%	160
School has a good range of subjects	96%	1%	3%	160
My child can take part in clubs	83%	6%	11%	160
School supports my child's wider personal development	93%	1%	6%	160
I would recommend Southridge to another parent	98%	3%	na	160

Coming up after half term

World Book Day is on Thursday 6th March and Miss McIntyre has been working hard to come up with some wonderful activities throughout the day. If the children wish to, they can come dressed up as a character from their favourite book, but be warned that with lots of activities planned for outdoors, you might get muddy! For those who would rather, please come to school in home clothes, but make sure they are warm and have sturdy footwear. Mellors, the school caterers, have also designed a fun World Book Day menu which can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Our School Council will be researching a new charity to support for the forthcoming year after the school's successful support of the Northumberland Wildlife Trust and Four Paws over the previous two years.

We will be holding a sponsored Fun Run in the final week of the spring term which will be aiming to raise money for both the School Council's new charity, and to support the installation of our Nature

Pond - we hope we can rely on your support. To try and avoid too many requests for donations and monies, we will not be taking part in Comic Relief this year.

Free school meals



Your child may be entitled to free school meals

To check eligibility for free school meals you must apply online at www.northtyneside.gov.uk and enter 'free school meals' in the search bar.

If you don't have an e-mail address please call to register for free meals (0191) 643 2288

Choose Option 3

Easy to apply

It only takes a few minutes to apply online, you will need your NI Number or your NASS reference to register.

Savings for your family

You could save over £427 per year for every child that qualifies for free school meals.

Your school benefits too

Your school receives additional funding for every child registered for free school meals. So the school and your children will be better resourced.

Please do not struggle in silence

If you are finding that financial pressures are affecting your child(ren)'s ability to access school, please email financial.support@southridgefirst.org.uk which is a confidential email address monitored by the headteacher and we will contact you to see what support we may be able to provide and signpost for you.

An excellent offer from Newcastle Eagles Basketball club!

GRASS ROOTS



**COME & JOIN US AT THE
'VERTU MOTORS ARENA'
FOR
NEWCASTLE EAGLES
Vs
SHEFFIELD SHARKS**

DATE: Friday 7th March 2025
TIME: 7:30pm Tip Off (Start)
VENUE: Vertu Motors Arena (NE4 7AF)

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets are usually £22 for adults and £14 for children but are being offered for only £7.50 per ticket (adult & child ticket

alike).

You can order as many tickets as you like, however please note they will be awarded on a first come first served basis.

HOW TO ORDER: All tickets are ordered digitally and payments made online. To order tickets please use the following link: <https://boxoffice.newcastle-eagles.com/matches/eagles-men-vs-sharks-mar/grassroots>

CONTACT US Any queries please text Keith Morris on 07703 533556 or Sarah Morris on 07725 128717.



WORLD BOOK DAY

Feed your curiosity...

6TH MARCH 2025



THE PIRATE—CRUNCHER GOUJONS
WITH SUPER TATO FRIES

~

NOAH'S GOLD'EN NUGGETS
WITH SUPER TATO FRIES

~

EVIL PEAS
AND
JACK'S DEICIOUS BEANS

~

AUGUSTUS GLOOP
CUP CAKES

