



# NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025



## BIG CHANGES TO LUNCHTIMES FOR KS1 & KS2

We are in the process of improving how we operate lunchtimes at Berry Hill. Currently we have a system where individual classes are called by midday supervisors, and the children have to come down then to the hall to eat at that set time. When I watch the children playing at OPAL time, I am always struck by the lovely activities and also how much our children play together across year groups. However, under our current system, children get no say as to when during lunch they get to eat or who they can sit and eat with, and we feel we can do this in a better way. A few of us have visited another school, who have devised a system that we feel would work really well for us, and we are going to have a 3-week period where we trial moving to a system where children in Years 1 – 6 can choose when and with whom to eat. We have also had initial meetings with NCC Catering to look at exciting menu modifications and being able to offer a wider choice of options. I am hoping that by improving the menu choices and changing lunchtimes to more of a cafeteria feel, that more families will opt for a hot meal over lunchboxes. We have also had initial meetings with NCC Catering to look at exciting menu modifications and being able to offer a wider choice of options. I am hoping that

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We'll start our trial on 30<sup>th</sup> June with all lunchtimes staying the same and then the week after we will trial having lunchtime 12:00 – 13:00 for all of KS1 and KS2.

We know there will be some glitches and challenges to overcome, and we know that there may be some individuals who take a little longer than others to remember to come and eat – the point of the trial is to develop our approaches and learn which children will need additional support to make the cafeteria style lunchtimes work. Please be patient with us during this time – I firmly believe the changes will be for the better once we're all sorted. We are hoping to introduce some of the new menu choices before the end of the school year, so we'll keep you posted.



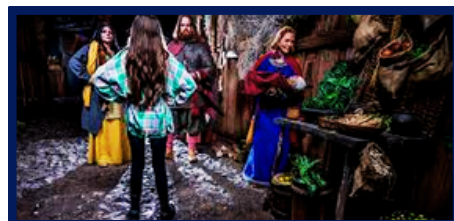


## OFSTED INSPECTION RESULTS



## TRIPS & VISITS

This term has been an extremely busy successful one for some brilliant trips and residential. Historically, residential have only been offered to children in Year 6 but this year we've set up a couple of residential in other year groups as trials... and they've been brilliant! Year 3 stayed overnight at Perlethorpe – they learnt about rocks, soils, Saxons, toasted marshmallows, tracked down a herd of rare white deer at 11 o'clock at night, made boats out of sticks and sailed these down a river that they were wading in! Year 4 have just returned from an overnight visit to the city of York where they toured the historic city, visited the Jorvik Viking Centre and took part in an immersive Viking day experience on day 2. Both of these were hugely successful and we're hoping to rebook for next year. We are also in the process of exploring an option for Year 5 for next year as well as our established longer Year 6 residential.



As the many of you who completed Ofsted's 'parent view' survey will be aware, we had an 'ungraded inspection during the middle of May. I wanted to start by thanking so many of you for taking the time to complete this and for the many kind comments that were shared with the staff and governors. As an 'ungraded report', the slightly underwhelming opening sentence can only state that school has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection, rather than getting a separate grading for all of the inspection areas. However, the inspection was an overwhelmingly positive experience, and I am very proud of the team that all of the hard work and improvements have been recognised. The report will be published on Ofsted's website early this week and we will add a link to our website as soon as it is. I will share the opening paragraphs though which stated: Pupils are happy at this school. They recommend it highly. The school's values of 'be kind, work hard, be brave' are well understood. Pupils do their best to live up to the school's high expectations. For example, they are proud when nominated by their peers to be 'values champions'.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils say that staff are kind and help them to learn new things. Staff encourage pupils to be the best they can be. Pupils achieve well at Berry Hill and are well prepared for their next stages in education.



## **EXTENSIVE BUILDING WORKS SOON!**

### **NEXT YEAR'S CLASSES & TRANSITION DAY**

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June, we will be sharing the new class structures and who will be their teacher next year with the children. We have been working on these for quite some time. It is a very tricky puzzle juggling multiple considerations when it is a year group that we mix up, but I stand by that helping children cope with some managed change sets them up so much more for their future. This is in preparation for our transition 'meet the teacher day' which will be on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July. On this day, children will spend most of their day with their new teacher, in the classroom they will be in next year, to help reduce any worries children might have about moving up a year group. To make parents' lives easier though, children will start and end the day in their current classrooms so you don't have to roam the grounds looking for their new classroom.

Following several years of being on a waiting list for building improvements, Berry Hill is finally in line to receive a roof and ceiling which do not double as a quaint water feature during downpours! We are having a new roof, ceiling, emergency lights, alarm systems and improvements made to our heating system and the works will begin at the start of the summer holidays. This was the good news part! The challenging element is that the full scope of this project is likely to last at least a year. During this time, the majority of the staff carpark will be out of bounds due to welfare cabins, skips, machinery etc which is going to impact on the parking spaces available around school – especially in the 2 park carparks. During next year, if there are any families that could walk to school that currently drive, walking would really help alleviate traffic but just to forewarn, we may all need to allow a little extra time at drop off and pick up times. It will all be worth it in the long run though.

### **BERRY HILL ON THE NEWS!**

Today, on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Parliament is launching recommendations to schools, families and communities to help prioritise play in a digital age. As a school that already has a huge commitment to play, we were asked to be filmed and interviewed and some of us may be on Central / ITV news on June 23<sup>rd</sup>!





## PTFA DISCOS AND EVENTS



I want to say a massive thank you to our PTFA for successfully managing to run summer discos for F2 up to Year 5 on the hottest day of the year, alongside all the other amazing events that they plan and put on. I would like to address however that logistically these are always a little challenging and safety is always our number 1 priority when parents or family members collect their children at the end. These events only run because of the amazing PTFA volunteers that give up all their time and the school staff that are able to stay late to enable it to happen. As a result of this, it can take much longer than normal to dismiss the children, particularly if they are very young. If a disco finishes at 4:30 and you need to have your child collected immediately at this time because you have other commitments for afterwards, perhaps it would be better to choose one or the other. I just had a couple of our helpers comment that they were met with very impatient adults at pickup and if they no longer decide they want to give up their evening to support, we simply won't be able to put these events on. I hope you all understand.

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL MEDIA / MESSAGING APP USE

During the last few weeks, we have seen a real spike in the number of issues being caused by children using social media and in particular, group messaging on various apps. The age restriction for these apps is usually 13 years old but I appreciate that many parents are happy for their child to use these and many can do so without issues. My personal feelings, however, are that many children using these apps are not emotionally ready to do so safely, responsibly and healthily. I also know as a parent as well as a headteacher, how challenging it can be to effectively monitor how our children are using these apps.

As a school, we have reached the point where we cannot continue to spend hours arbitrating between children who have fallen out or been unkind on group chats outside of school. If an issue comes into school, we will of course deal with any at-school-behaviour. But if parents are unhappy with something another child has written or said online out of school, I would urge parents or carers to contact the other parents directly, so that it can be resolved. If it was the case where a parent didn't have the contact details, we would offer to pass on the concern if you were happy for the other parent to be given your contact details so that hopefully the issue could be ironed out. We have a very comprehensive e-safety programme within school and spend much time exploring these issues, but ultimately there is a point where our jurisdiction as a school ends.

### INSET DATES 2025/2026

The first day back after the summer is Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> of September. The 3 remaining INSET days are scheduled for:  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June; Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July.