



# Corbridge Middle School

July 2023 Newsletter





# Corbridge Middle School



Well, I can't quite believe that we have come to the end of the academic year! And what a year it has been! I have absolutely loved every minute of my first full year here at Corbridge. I honestly do feel like the luckiest and proudest Head Teacher around! We have crammed so much into this term and it's been a real delight to watch the children engage in so many incredible opportunities. From electric car races, residential, science competitions, SATs and school musicals, the children have approached all aspects of school life with such dynamism and flair, always demonstrating our core values day to day. I am so proud of the students and their attitudes this term and all year round.

This term of course is also the one where we say goodbye to our amazing Year 8 students. You have come to the end of your 4 year journey at Corbridge, but I know this is just the start of what will no doubt be a hugely successful next phase of your education. You all have so much to offer. We wish you all the very best at high school and do keep us posted on your progress. We look forward to hearing about all of your future successes.



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I would like to say a huge personal thank you to the staff team for their relentless enthusiasm this term and for their unwavering support of our children. As you will also be aware, our dear Mrs Ricketts is leaving us this term and whilst we are going to miss her very much we wish her all the very best in her future endeavors. Thank you for your remarkable service to our school and good luck with your new role.

Following a successful recruitment drive, we are thrilled to have appointed Mrs Claire Parkin to the role of Assistant Head SENDCo and she will be starting with us after Christmas. More information will be shared with you after the summer holiday but we very much look forward to welcoming Mrs Parkin to the Corbridge family.

We have lots of developments taking place over the summer which are all very exciting. We are getting a new porch built on to the front of school which will improve security and access; we are having new art and design work developed in school, both internally and externally to lift the look of the building; and our website is having an update to improve the functionality and aesthetic. These are all welcome additions which we can't wait to share with you all in September.

Finally, I would like to thank all the parents, carers and families. It has been wonderful to work alongside you all this year and I really appreciate your feedback and support.

I wish you all a safe and happy summer break. We look forward to welcoming the students back to school on Tuesday 5th September 2023.

Warmest wishes,



# Corbridge Middle School





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## **Hats off for a top performance!**

Well done to all the cast and backstage team of our school musical, Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jnr.

It has been months of fun but tiring rehearsals and all of your hard work paid off!

It was an incredible 4 night run, with sold out audiences and the feedback was just incredible.

Your commitment and drive throughout the process had been fantastic and it was so wonderful to see the show come together in such spectacular fashion.

Thank you to all the staff who helped and supported the show as well as the students who created the set.

The whole production was truly terrific.

Great job everyone!



Corbridge  
Middle School





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## **A Bewitching Spectacle!**

This year is the second year that CMS has been an RSC Associate School. Following on from 'Much Ado About Nothing' last year, we upped our game and as well as performing at Northern Stage alongside 7 other schools from across the North East, we performed Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' in school.

We are so utterly proud of every single member of that superb KS3 cast. They all showed great resilience throughout rehearsals and we were blown away by their commitment and determination.

They made a wonderful 'family' and supported each other every step of the way. The talent that was on display amazed everyone that saw them. So many of the cast made new friends and found a new passion for acting which is a joy to help foster.

We hope they continue it next year, wherever they are.



# Corbridge Middle School

## Y8 London Visit



Well what an incredible week we've had on the Year 8 residential to London! The week was full to the brim with amazing activities and we all had a brilliant time across the 5 days! We had the most delicious food throughout the trip and managed to squeeze in so much each day including Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, Harry Potter Studios, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, The Tower of London, The Thames River Cruise, The Houses of Parliament, The Natural History Museum and two west end shows! I don't know how we fit it all in! The children were fantastic throughout the trip and really demonstrated our school values. We are so proud of them. We hope everyone got some well earned rest on their return!



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## STEMfest 2023



A group of Year 7s have visited STEMfest in the Vertu Arena to find out about the huge array of STEM careers available in the North East from around 50 employers.

There were four zones to explore; Manufacturing, CyberTechnology, Environment and Space with plenty of hands-on activities to keep the pupils busy.

One of the highlights of the day was meeting Jim Christensen from the Aldrin Family Foundation for a Mapping Mars workshop. Jim had travelled from Florida for the event and was utterly engaging. He even answered many questions from our pupils including why Americans have Thanksgiving and Independence Day and whether he thinks WalMart or Target is better!



# Corbridge Middle School

## Jigs & Reels at Slaley First School



Our Ceilidh Band thoroughly enjoyed heading out to Slaley First School recently, where the ensemble not only taught the young children about the different instruments, but what life is like at Corbridge Middle School. It was wonderful to meet all the young people at Slaley and to take part in some traditional dances together whilst our ensemble played.



# July 2023 Newsletter

## CMS EcoCharter

On the next page is a copy of the new EcoCharter that has been drafted by the EcoCommittee.

It combines the school values of Responsibility, Respect, Care, Resilience and Pride with the actions we wish to take to make our school more sustainable. Although there is work still to be done, this year the EcoCommittee and Whole School Community have some tangible environmental achievements.

Highlights have included:

- Our Biodiversity Day which raised £300 to protect and preserve biodiversity.
- Supporting the Eco Festival at St Andrew's Church, Corbridge - sharing good practice with the local community.
- Being named as overall winners of the national Terracycle pen recycling competition and donating £1000 to West Northumberland Foodbank and the Northumberland Wildlife Trust.
- Had a winning art design featured on the side of one of the Council's bin lorries travelling around Tynedale.
- Two of our EcoCommittee members gave a presentation on the excellent work we do in school at the Sustainable Schools Summit in Birmingham.
- The EcoCommittee gave plastic awareness assemblies and removed single use plastic bottles from the dining hall (after a ~10-year campaign by Dr Batchelder - never give up)!

We're looking forward to seeing what progress the EcoCommittee can make in 2023-24!

## Corbridge Middle School EcoCharter

*Drafted by the EcoCommitte in June 2023*

The EcoCommittee will use form time discussions, assemblies and themed awareness days to help educate our school community on the importance of environmental awareness and how individuals can make a difference. We will consult with pupils and staff on our plans and we will keep people updated on any planned developments or events. Change is difficult, we will show **RESILIENCE** to ensure the school community becomes more sustainable.

### *Specific action points:*

- **Waste** – We will encourage the school community to be **RESPONSIBLE** when using equipment, materials, and resources to prevent waste including everything from Art supplies to PE equipment.
- **Energy** – When not required we will turn off lights, projectors and computers or laptops to reduce energy use.
- **Water** – We turn off taps and report leaks around school to reduce wasting of water.
- **Food and Healthy living** – We try to reduce food waste and promote a healthy diet for people and the planet.
- **Biodiversity** – We treat nature with **RESPECT**. We will look for innovative ways to create areas for wildlife.
- **Litter** – We take **PRIDE** in our school. We will not drop litter and if we see some litter on the ground, we will put it in the bin. Litter picks will help keep rubbish to a minimum.
- **Global Citizenship** – We act local but think global. We **CARE** and understand the actions that we take in Corbridge will have an impact on everyone.



# Corbridge Middle School

## Green Power 2023



For the third year running, the Year 6 GreenPower electric car team visited Gateshead Stadium to compete against 23 local teams in the North East 2023 competition. Twelve children built the car and bodywork from scratch, choosing the sea turtle as their design. SDG 14 - Life Below Water - highlights the increasing challenges living things face in our rivers and oceans every day.

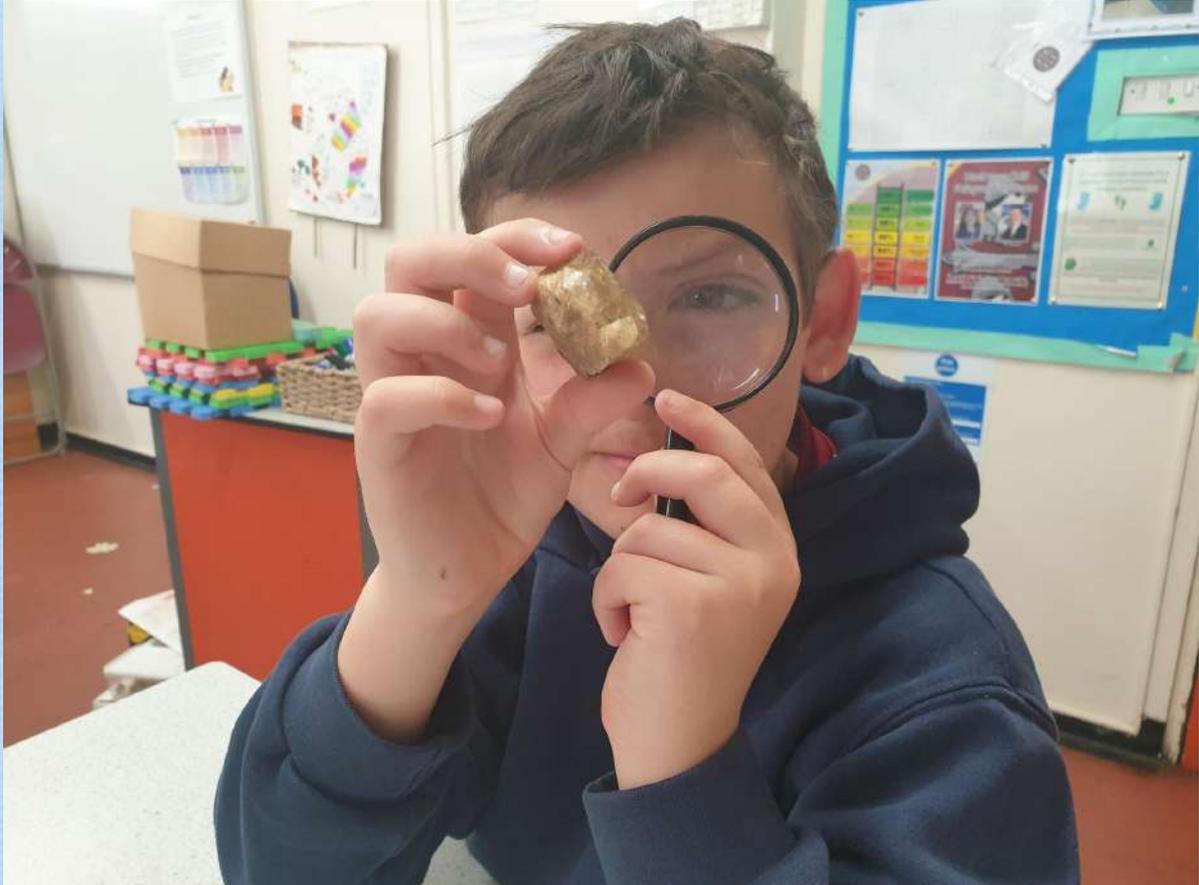
Each member of the team competed in a slalom or drag race and the event finished with a one lap head to head. The team was delighted with a trophy for 3rd place in the slalom and for 1st place in the bodywork category.

Much fun was had by all involved and thanks go to all the parents and extended family who came to support on the day.



# July 2023 Newsletter

## School Of Rocks



This term we were delighted to welcome The Common Room to school for some STEM enrichment sessions.

Year 6 are currently studying adaptations and evolution and enjoyed a Lego workshop to build Arthropleura - a many-legged insect. Year 7 completed the School of Rocks activity learning about the ground beneath our feet which ties in with their next topic of Earth and Atmosphere.

Year 8 students are about to study electricity as their final science topic in school. 8W and 8V had a session on the advantages and disadvantages of electric cars, they then used their team-working skills to build a Lego model. It was another STEMtastic opportunity for the pupils to learn from other scientists in the region.



## Biodiversity Day



For the national Great Big Green Week our EcoCommittee held the first Corbridge Middle School Biodiversity Day.

The pupils had a roarsome time celebrating life on Earth! There were an incredible array of living organisms represented including spiders, squid, butterflies, lemurs and lions. The competition for the best costume in KS2 was won by a creative cheetah and in KS3 the prize was collected by an extraordinary elephant.

Between the cake sale and donations for dressing-down the event raised just over £300 which will be used to help conserve biodiversity by adopting wild animals with the World Wildlife Fund, supporting animals in Chester Zoo and to promote our own biodiversity on the school grounds. The day will also be used as evidence to gain accreditation as an EcoSchool and is supported by the Northumberland Sustainable Schools Network. Protecting wildlife links to #SDG14 #LifeBelowWater & #SDG15 #LifeOnLand.



# July 2023 Newsletter



## Y8 Leavers Assembly

What a fantastic last day we have had at Corbridge Middle School. We said farewell to our amazing Year 8s as they head off to High School following the summer break. Here are a few pictures from our assembly today. We wish you all the very best.



# Corbridge Middle School

## Y5 Concert



The Y5 concert at the start of June was a real example of Corbridge demonstrating our core values. The children showed incredible respect and care for each other, and each child had their own responsibility and showed much resilience! A real team effort - we were proud of you all!



# July 2023 Newsletter

## Sun - Sea - Surfing



Idyllic conditions were on offer at Tynemouth for our first ever Enrichment Programme surfing sessions. A superb time was had by all in conjunction with Tynemouth Surf School .



## Big Bang Success



Adam, one of our Year 8s was in the finals of the National Big Bang Science Competition with his project on Which Bird Food Is Best? A few weeks of waiting after the virtual VIP judging he was invited to present his project in a showcase event at the Big Bang Fair in Birmingham NEC. We are delighted that Adam was announced as the overall Junior Science Award winner. The judges were particularly impressed with Adam's methodical manner, passion and enthusiasm.

Dr Batchelder is immensely proud of Adam and of the Weather and Climate Club team who were also in the finals. Corbridge Middle was the only school in the North East to be shortlisted in this national competition - a real accolade for our young scientists.



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## Go Green Gorillas



At an exciting finals event in the House of Lords in London our Go Green Gorillas were named as one of the Young Green Briton Challenge winners. They wowed the judges with a video they made explaining how they grew salad that was eaten in school dinners, created a wormery to make fertiliser, held plant and seed sales to raise funds and demonstrated resilience when the polytunnel was damaged. The team intend to use the £1000 investment prize to support and promote School Gardening. The challenge involved 3,000 young people across 16 schools so their win was really sensational.

We made the most of the trip to London with a visit to the Sealife Centre and plenty of sightseeing. Apparently we just missed King Charles arriving at Buckingham Palace by a few minutes but Dr Batchelder and Mrs Pound did get a chance to talk to Chris Packham one of the Young Green Briton Ambassadors!

We are very grateful to the Green Britain Foundation, the Ministry of EcoEducation, Social Innovation for All, I have a Voice, Volunteers for Future, Dale Vince and Egger for making it all possible



# Corbridge Middle School

## Celebrating Success



It has been another wonderful year of sporting success for our pupils outside of school.

Recent achievements have included:

- Will winning the Northumberland U12 Cricketer Of The Year
- Freya finishing 4th in the England Gold Tumbling Championships
- Toby competing at national and international sailing competition, representing GB at the world championships in Italy

Congratulations to all of our pupils who have excelled over the year.



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## Dance & Drama



A huge well done to our dance and drama clubs, who performed in our celebration assembly this week. The quality of the work was superb and you have all shown such resilience and commitment across the year. Great work everyone!



# Corbridge Middle School

## SCHOOL CONNECT PROJECT

HELP YOUR SCHOOL TO  
RAISE FUNDS BY  
DONATING YOUR  
UNWANTED CLOTHING  
INTO THE CONTAINER  
SITUATED WITHIN YOUR  
SCHOOL!

REMEMBER ONCE  
YOUR SCHOOL HITS  
£1000 WE GIFT THE  
SCHOOL AN APPLE  
TREE TO PLANT  
WITH THE CHILDREN

REMEMBER TO INVITE THE  
COMMUNITY TO DONATE!



### WHY IS RECYCLING IMPORTANT?

- RECYCLING REDUCES WASTE SENT TO LANDFILLS
- RECYCLING PREVENTS POLLUTION
- RECYCLING HELPS REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



REMEMBER TO SPREAD  
THE WORD AND  
ENCOURAGE DONATIONS  
THROUGH YOUR SCHOOL  
CLOTHING CONTAINER,  
THIS CAN INCLUDE  
FRIENDS AND FAMILY  
MEMBERS TO HELP WITH  
FUNDRAISING FOR YOUR  
SCHOOL





# July 2023 Newsletter

## E-Safety Focus



# National Online Safety<sup>®</sup>

Each week we are providing some guidance for Parents and Carers about a particular app or online service which you may find useful. The guides can be found on our Friday Flyer and give a useful insight and highlight key safety features which many parents have found useful.

**This week's spotlight is on W App**

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# W APP

AGE RESTRICTION

12+

on the App Store,  
'Everyone' on Google Play

LIBRARY

Developed in Germany, this social networking app is called 'W App' in the Apple Store and Google Play but is also branded as 'Slay' in some territories. Aimed primarily at teens and marketed as a 'zero-negativity' zone, it asks users to connect with others from their school. They are then asked a positive question (such as "Who is the nicest person?") and shown four people from their school to choose from. All users from a school can appear in the poll: not just those a child is friends with. The app is mainly anonymous – but **does** offer clues to reveal who selected you for each question.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### FAKE ACCOUNTS

There is no verification when signing up to W App. Once someone joins, they can see all users at their school and add them if they wish. Users provide their name, gender, school and grade – but are also able to change these (aside from their name) as often as they like. This concerned our expert: predators could potentially keep attempting to build connections with children at different schools.

### PROFILE OVERSHARING

Young people tend to have multiple social media accounts, so it's vital their identity is protected online. By default, W App shares someone's school and grade, while users choose whether to share their full name, photo and other social accounts. Most people appear to select this – making it easier for someone to build up a picture of who they are, what they enjoy and where they go to school.

### SPAMMING CONTACTS

The app's activity feed notifies a user when they have been put forward for a poll. They're then given the option to reveal the initial of the person who nominated them, by inviting a friend to join the app. The friend doesn't have to sign up, but they will receive a 'get the app now' text, followed by a link. This process could result in texts being continually sent to a child's contacts.



### CATFISHING RISKS

As well as invented fake accounts, users could also sign up and pretend to be someone else from their school. By joining under another person's name (possibly with their photo), they can take part in polls while masquerading as that other person. Some polls hint at an attraction or crush, which – if deliberately misused by imposters – could result in misunderstandings and embarrassment for teens.

### SUBSCRIPTION COSTS

W App is free to download and use, but there is also a 'gold membership' package (costing £4.99 per week) available. Subscribing allows users to reveal the names of people who selected them in polls (slightly defeating the point of it being an anonymous app), gives unlimited hints and offers exclusive play modes – all of which may tempt a curious young user into spending their money.

### REPEATED USE

Like most other social media platforms, W App wants users to log in regularly. Every time someone completes a set of 12 polls, they earn virtual coins. These can be cashed in for perks such as being included in random polls (so that more users will see them) or adding their name to their crush's poll. This may not seem much of an incentive currently, but that may alter as the app evolves.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### DISCUSS FRIEND REQUESTS

Talk to your child about the risk of sharing their other social accounts, especially on anonymous platforms where there is no verification – so a user could be anyone. If someone they don't normally talk to at school approaches your child via W App and suggests connecting on TikTok, Snapchat or Instagram, emphasise that it's safest to confirm it with that person face to face before accepting or replying.

### PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

It's crucial that trusted adults regularly remind children about the importance of not sharing too much of their personal information online (and demonstrate it on their own social accounts, where possible). W App automatically displays the user's school on their profile – but if your child does want to use the app, you can advise them to only enter their first name and not to upload an image of their face.

### BE MINDFUL OF REJECTION

The polls in W App are designed to be complimentary rather than negative. However, never being nominated or picked by their peers could leave a child – especially a status-conscious teen – feeling ignored and isolated. If you think that W App is having this effect on your child, it might be time for a supportive reminder that social media doesn't reflect someone's true worth or popularity.

### DO SOME 'APP ADMIN'

Before letting your child download W App, you may want to (via their device's settings) disable the option to make in-app purchases: £4.99 per week for the subscription can soon mount up. Likewise, if a friend's use of W App is causing your child to be inundated with texts inviting them to sign up too, you could suggest asking that friend to stop selecting your child's name from their contacts list.

## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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National Online Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/w-app-anonymous-polls/id1645858841> | <https://www.slay.co.uk/>  
<https://techcrunch.com/2023/01/18/german-teens-went-crazy-for-this-compliments-app-and-now-vcs-are-backing-its-next-phase/>

# Domestic abuse is everyone's business



You are not alone

## Support services in Northumberland

**DASSN** for adults – 01670 820199

**NDAS** for adults and children – 01434 60 80 30

**Cygnus Support** – 01670 853977

**Acorns** – 0191 3498366

[www.northumberland.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/domesticabuse)



# Corbridge Middle School

## Important Dates Summer 2 2023

Date	Event	Aimed at
04/09/23	Teacher Training Day	All
05/09/23	School opens for the autumn term	All



