



March 3rd 2023

Welcome Back

I hope that you had an enjoyable half term and that you were able to spend some quality time together. The children have started the new half term very well and it has been great to get outside for PE and some of the after-school activity clubs.

Ofsted Report

I was delighted to be able to share the final Ofsted report with Governors, staff and parents this week. I am incredibly proud of our team and to achieve outstanding grades in every area is not easy under the revised Inspection Framework. It reflects a great deal of work, training and collaboration between us all over a number of years. There were many wonderful comments and observations from the inspectors which Miss Richardson and I recorded that did not make it into the final report due to the size and nature of the report, but I thought I would share some of the overarching themes.

The 'Quality of Education' is quite rightly the most important strand of any inspection. The inspectors were impressed with how our curriculum is designed, how we have researched and applied our knowledge of what our children need and how they learn. They thought our focus on reading and the skills of our staff have to develop reading are excellent, from Early Years to Year 6. Inspectors felt the curriculum was wide and rich leading to amazing standards within the children's books.

The inspectors were so impressed with our children. In terms of 'Behaviour and Attitude', our children excel and like all elements of this report, it does not just happen for two days during Ofsted. They are respectful and kind, and show lovely manners. Visitors often comment on this and you can feel the supportive atmosphere just by walking around the classes and playground. I have been through many inspections over the years, and the changes over recent times involve inspectors having conversations with lots of children about a range of topics or school life. Every child who spoke to the inspectors impressed them. Well done to all of you!

In terms of 'Personal Development', the inspectors were impressed by the RSE curriculum and topics covered in assemblies, helping to make our children well-rounded and thoughtful citizens of the future. They thought that some of the wider opportunities in outdoor learning promoted good personal development and that opportunities provided for the children such as *Monty does Musicals* helped develop confidence.

'Leadership and Management' in school is far more than Governors, me or the Senior Leadership Team. Many of our teachers have additional Subject Leadership responsibilities and they were praised for their knowledge, skills and commitment. Governors understand the school well, challenge and support effectively and bring important skills to the team.

Not many schools achieve an outstanding judgement in Early Years and this grade is testament to our amazing team in Nursery and Reception. The Early Years curriculum at Montalbo is ambitious and flows well into Year 1 and the National Curriculum. Inspectors had a real knowledge of early years education and chatted to our youngest children quite a lot during the inspection, who were keen to show our visitors how much they knew!

Our inclusive ethos shone throughout the inspection with our expertise and care for all children, including those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, praised by inspectors.

I am so pleased that the inspectors recognised what I have known for a long time – that Montalbo is outstanding! The report will be published in due course on Ofsted's website. From all of us at school, thank you for your lovely Weduc comments, emails and messages – they mean a great deal.

Mother's Day

On March 17th we would like to recognise Mother's Day and invite Mums, Grans or any family member male/female into school. There will be refreshments and activities to share with your child/children from 1.30-3pm.

World Book Day

I hope that you enjoyed visiting our World Book Day gallery. It is lovely to see the progression of work from Nursery to Year 6 on a similar topic, and this was very evident with the work from the picture book, *Tuesday*. Thank you to Miss Richardson, Mrs Bowron and all of our staff for the wonderful gallery.

Wild Escape

Eco Council and I will be visiting the Bowes Museum for a 'Wild Escape' project looking at sustainability and as part of this the children will be sculpting birds using natural and recycled materials.

Tidy Ted

In Wednesday's assembly we were visited by Tidy Ted from the Civic Pride Team at Durham County Council. Ted and his helper Kate talked to the children about the importance of either recycling our waste or putting it in the bin. They informed us of the dangers litter poses to animals and how it could encourage vermin. Next week some classes will visit the local area with our litter picking sticks to help keep our area tidy.

Connections through Coffee and Crafts

We would like to invite you to a Coffee and Crafts session at school on Tuesday March 7th between 2.15-3.15pm. Hopefully these can become fairly regular events depending on if they prove popular or not! The basic idea is for parents/carers to meet up for a chat, coffee and perhaps help to make something that we can use in class or just for your pleasure! It is a time when you might catch up with people or meet new parents/carers. Mrs Bowron will host these informal occasions in the library and we hope that you can join us.

Brass Tuition

The issues with booking brass tuition with the Music Service has been resolved. To book you can visit www.durhammusic.org.uk or use the QR code on the postcard Year 4s received.

Swimming

Year 5 pupils will need to bring a tight T-shirt and Pyjama bottoms or joggers (ones with a waist tie if possible) to wear over their swimming costumes as they will be doing their water safety in the next swimming lesson.

EYFS

Thank you to parents/carers for their kind donations of toys and resources. They are greatly appreciated.

Attendance: The links between positive attendance and attainment are well-documented and this pattern is repeated at Montalbo.

It is so important that children are in school as often as possible and that they are punctual.

Below is a summary of attendance for this week.

Class	Attendance (%)
Reception	89.2
Year 1	96.0
Year 2	94.8
Year 3	95.7
Year 4	93.2
Year 5	95.8
Year 6	96.2
Whole school	94.5 %

Dates for the Diary

March 6 th	Wild Escape (Eco Council) at the Bowes Museum
March 7 th	Coffee and Crafts Session for Parents 2.15-3.15pm
March 7 th	FOMS meeting 5:15pm in school.
March 17 th	Red Nose Day/Mother's Day Event in school from
March 21 st	Reception Class – Multiskills
March 22 nd	Yr 2 Football
March 23 rd	Yr 6 Multiskills
March 27 th	Yr 3/4 Orienteering (15 pupils)
March 30 th	Yr3,4,5 & 6 Taekwondo sessions
April 3 rd – 14 th	Easter Holiday
April 24 th	All Stars Cricket Roadshow (All classes Y1-6)

Mr. C Minikin
Head Teacher

School Lottery Link Membership Link below:

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/montalbo-nursery-primary-school>

