

# Fellside Matters

A collective cheer sounded from Year Six children on completion of their final (the 9th) SATs paper last Friday. Their attitude and commitment during the tests week and in preceding weeks has been outstanding. The children have every reason to be confident of excellent results later this term.

Nationally there has been considerable media and parliamentary interest in SATs this year. Issues have been raised around curriculum content in Year Six classes, the purpose of the tests and concerns about stress on children.

From our perspective ... We retain a full, broad curriculum as long as is sensible in Year Six with full access to sport and the arts—their residential visit was in the second half of last term. Naturally we ensure appropriate teaching and learning, and revision and practice opportunities in the approach to tests.

The purpose of the tests? Do they test schools or children? I could write pages on this one. Within school we are assessing children and individual results are important to children, parents and teachers. There is no doubt that at a regional and national level results are used to rank schools (newspapers,

etc.) and judge school performance (Ofsted, DCSF etc.).

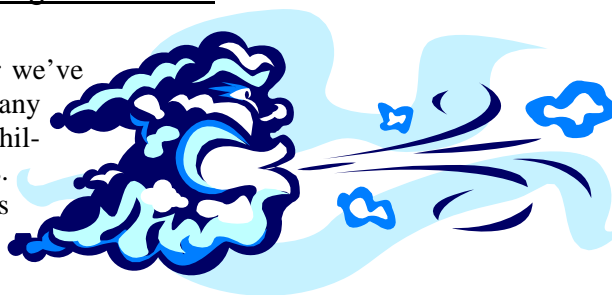
We currently operate at a very high level in these crude rankings (5th Nationally in 2007), which is nice, but are such 'league tables' useful or necessary? Probably not.

Are the tests stressful? Well what test taken seriously isn't? In my experience a combination of full curriculum coverage, expert teaching and massive commitment from children enables every child to enter the tests confident in their own ability to succeed. Our result bear witness.

It seems certain that SATs in their current form have just about outlived their usefulness. Another one, maybe two years left of the current system I should guess. I know that any teacher at Fellside can give an accurate assessment of levels for individual children without any test and we are currently refining this process. Equally I'm certain that government (of any political persuasion) will wish to retain a system for comparing schools and judging performance.

## Moving in the Wind

What a fine display of wind power we've had for the past few weeks. Many thanks for your work with your children and the interesting creations. Which have enhanced our grounds with their movement and colour.



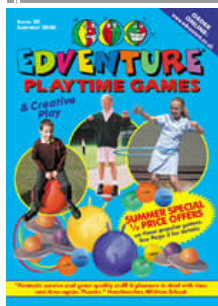
## Extreme Reading

This exhibition of your children, reading in often unimaginable situations, is entertaining and does of course reinforce the high profile of reading at Fellside. Your fabulous photos are attracting much attention and comment. The Local Authority want the display available at Dryden Centre (for all who work in Gateshead schools).

## New Play Equipment

The school council recently purchase playground toys and equipment to the value of £500, many thanks to Friends of Fellside for their generous donation to make this possible.

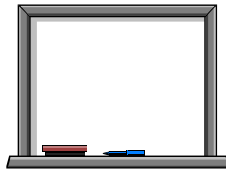
The school council's recent raffle for the Steve Harper shirt and ball raised a further £92.00 for them to spend on more toys.



## Further Improvements

During the half term holiday the Key Stage 2 yard will have new thermoplastic markings and target boards installed (weather permitting).

All classes from Reception to Year 5 will have interactive whiteboards installed. They are already in Year Six and Nursery.



## Football

Congratulations to one of our three football teams which entered the Chase Park May Fair. The trophy arrived back at Fellside for the third time in four years.



## Mathletics

Our new on-line maths resource 'Mathletics' is proving a huge success at school and at home. Children from Year One upwards already know their log-on procedure. Reception will be taught by Year Six shortly after half term.

## Diary of Planned Events

### To end of Term

Wed 21st May	Y3 to Vindolanda	
Friday 23rd May—Monday 2nd June	Half Term Holiday	
Saturday 14th June	Pedalling Picnic (Derwent Walk)	
Monday 16th—Friday 20th June	National Bike Week	
Thursday 19th June	3.30 pm Bike Trials Event and 6.00 pm New Reception Parents Meeting	
Friday 20th June	Friends of Fellside Summer Fair	
<b>Monday 23rd June</b>	<b>School Closed—occasional day holiday</b>	
Tuesday 24th June	Y3 performing at the Sage—songs from 'Joseph'	
Thursday 26th June	2.00 pm 'Strawberry & Wine Concert'	
Friday 27th June	Athletics Festival—Gateshead Stadium	
Wednesday 2nd July	'Joseph' performance for parents by Y3 and Drama Club	
Friday 4th July	Y4 to Life Centre and End of year reports to parents	
Tuesday 8th July	Y5 to Thornley Woods and KS1 to Hall Hill Farm	
Thursday 10th July	Y6 Leavers Performance (evening)	
Friday 11th July	Friends of Fellside BBQ—live music	
Monday 14th July	Drama group performing Oliver AM and Sports Day PM	
Tuesday 15th July	Alternative Sports Day (if wet Monday)	
Wednesday 16th July	(evening) Y6 Leavers Party (Blaydon Rugby Club)	
Thursday 17th July	PM Discos for children	
Friday 18th July	Last day of term	

**Children return to school on Tuesday 2nd September.**

Of course a major event at the end of term is Mrs Ducker's retirement after 37 years at Fellside. We will of course be marking this occasion with events appropriate for children, staff past and present, governors and parents.

There are a few 'swansong' appearances for Mrs Ducker at concerts and performances listed above. She will also be at the Friends of Fellside BBQ on 11th July. Always a big occasion and perhaps the best opportunity for a goodbye from parents and families.

I'm sure many of you would like to contribute towards her leaving present. We'll circulate details after half term.