



Autumn Term Newsletter

19th December 2025



Dear Parents / Carers,

A very warm welcome to our autumn term newsletter. We were delighted to begin the term by opening our brand new nursery, and I'm pleased to say that our youngest pupils have settled very well into the Bill Quay Family. We know how important it is for pupils to access the curriculum in a variety of ways, and so to support this, all pupils have enjoyed either a school trip or have welcomed in specialist visitors to enhance their learning experiences. We have participated in lots of different sporting events and festivals, and our talented musicians and singers have performed at a variety of events, including the wonderful Coffee and Carols sessions that have taken place over the last two weeks. Thank you for all your support this term. We wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming children back to school on Monday 5th January 2026.

Mrs Devine

Music

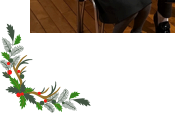


As usual, this has been a very busy term for music at Bill Quay! All of our classes have had the opportunity to perform at least once for an audience, whether it's been a Stay and Play for Nursery, Nativity for Reception Class, Harvest Festival for our KS1 pupils or the Coffee and Carols events that we've been enjoying this week at school. Lots of percussion instruments have been played this term, and Year 4 pupils have had their first taste of playing the recorder while Year 5 pupils have begun learning the ukulele for the first time.

We're delighted that we've been able to continue with our brass ensemble following the departure of our Year 6 pupils in the summer. We have thirteen pupils learning a variety of instruments with Mr Weaver, and they tell me they're all thoroughly enjoying it despite it being tricky at first! Our new guitarists have made a great start to their lessons too, while those who have been learning for a while are improving and trying more challenging tunes. It was lovely to hear our pianists performing at the Coffee and Carols events, and we've been able to celebrate ABRSM exam success for two of our piano pupils this month as well - congratulations to Nate and Bea!

We have almost fifty KS2 pupils in our choir, which is amazing! It's fantastic that so many pupils love coming to sing on a Friday after school, and they've performed their Christmas songs very well both in school and out in the local community. They filmed a video of 'Somewhere Only We Know' to take part in a virtual Christmas Card project organised by the Gateshead Music Service. You can watch the full video [here](#).

We have our Spring Music Showcase coming up at Heworth Grange on 1st April 2026, so we're excited about what the next term has in store - well done, everyone!



OPAL News

We were delighted to achieve the platinum award for OPAL earlier in the term. This is the highest accolade available and places us in the top 1% of schools nationally for the quality of our play. OPAL truly has transformed our lunchtimes, creating richer, happier and more imaginative play experiences for all of our pupils. We would like to say a very special thank you to Mrs Lennon for leading the project with such passion, and to Miss Scott for supporting Mrs Lennon so well.



Christmas Celebrations

We have thoroughly enjoyed getting into the festive spirit and we are all very much ready for the big day now! It has been wonderful to see the hall packed for the Reception nativity and the various 'Coffee and Carols' events. It was our annual Christmas Fayre two week ago and it was great to see the children enjoying all of the various activities with their grown-ups. School fayres are valuable fundraising events and we are delighted to say that this year's fayre raised a grand total of £1739.67! A huge thank you to everyone who generously gave up their time to help with running the stalls and those who helped serve refreshments at our Christmas events. We would also like to thank one of our parents who has worked with us to provide matched funding of an additional £1,000 from Barclays Bank.



Sporting News

This term, Key Stage 2 children have had the opportunity to try some very unusual sports. Year 5 and 6 had a brilliant time axe-throwing and taking part in archery.



Reception



Reception class visited Wharton Park, Durham for a festive workshop. The children took part in a trail around the park, looking for Santa's reindeer, then returned to the visitor centre to explore old-fashioned toys and then made reindeer food and a festive toy.

Year 1



Year 1 enjoyed a fantastic visit from That History Bloke, exploring what life was like in the past, learning all about Victorian homes, daily life and the toys children played with long ago. It was a wonderful hands-on experience that really brought history to life!

Year 2



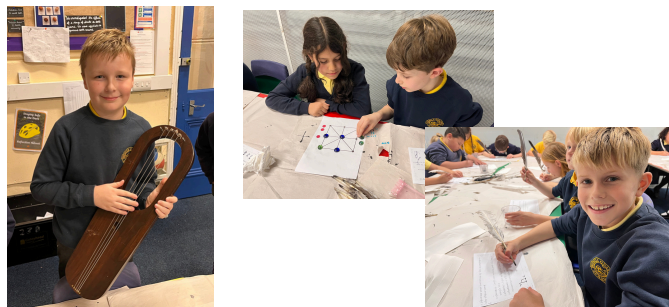
Year 2 enjoyed a wonderful trip to Newcastle Keep this term. They explored the castle and even had the opportunity to become knights!

Year 3



When Durham University outreach visited Year 3, they created artwork based on Stone Age cave paintings and also made some super clay pots.

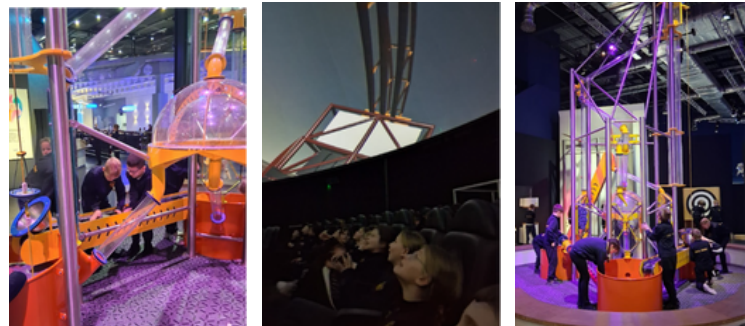
Year 4



Year 4 also enjoyed a fun-filled and very interactive session with Richard, 'That History Bloke', this term. They learned all about the role and importance of Anglo-Saxon monks and enjoyed exploring artefacts, writing with quills and playing an Anglo-Saxon inspired game.

Year 5

Year 5 had a wonderful visit to the Centre for Life in Newcastle. As well as ice-skating, they enjoyed a fantastic Planetarium experience that showed them the different constellations in the night sky. It was a brilliant experience for everyone – including staff members.



Year 6

Year 6 had a brilliant and very informative visit to SafetyWorks!

The children learned about peer pressure and its consequences regarding arson and shoplifting. They also learned how to stay safe on the roads, next to the Metro and when near water.

