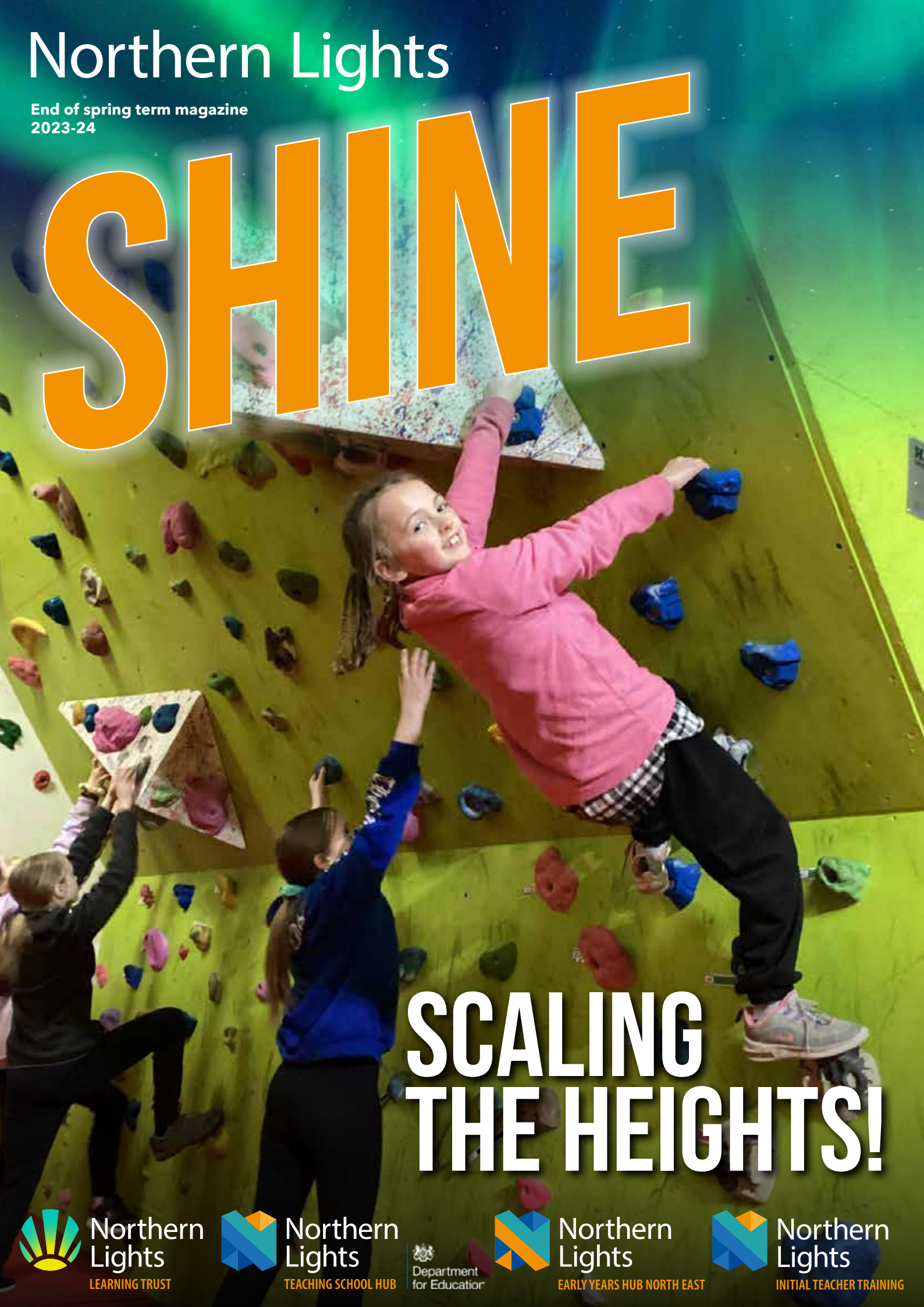


Northern Lights

End of spring term magazine
2023-24

SHINE



SCALING THE HEIGHTS!

There's lots to be proud about



Dear parents/carers

We are pleased to share with you this edition of 'Shine', which shares a small amount of the fantastic things that happen across our Trust. This half term we are delighted to have welcomed Grange Primary School, in Hartlepool, to our Trust and hope that this edition helps our Grange parents and carers see a little more of what happens across our wider Northern Lights family that your child's school is now part of.

In Northern Lights this year, we are focussing on two of our Trust values in particular – the 'Voice of the child' and 'Proud'. I was privileged this half term to attend the Trust 'One Voice' music concert which embodied both of those values excellently. The children and young people's voices shone out and we were unbelievably proud of the

young people themselves, who performed so well, but also pride in our staff who both performed and showed real dedication in pulling an event like this together.

Our other Trust values are 'Support', 'Integrity' and 'Community'. I have also seen these values demonstrated in abundance across our Trust this half term and I know you will see many examples in this publication. I am always wowed by the range of opportunities our children and young people have, and wish we could fit even more examples in this newsletter!

As we finish for our Easter break, I would like to wish all of our families a safe and happy holiday. I am enjoying seeing the signs of spring all around us, from the bulbs flowering to the first lambs we see arriving. I hope that our families have time to enjoy the change in season together.

Best Wishes
Mrs J. Heaton OBE

OUR SCHOOLS MARCH 2024



- Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy, Sunderland
- Grange Primary School, Hartlepool
- Hart Community Primary School, Hartlepool
- Holley Park Academy, Washington
- Ian Ramsey Church of England Academy, Stockton-on-Tees
- St Helen's Primary School, Hartlepool
- St Peter's Elwick Church of England Primary School, Hartlepool
- Venerable Bede Church of England Academy, Sunderland

**Expected to join in the academic year 2023-24 is St Aidan's CE Academy in Darlington.*



Northern Lights' values tell our story. This is us:

We place the **voice of the child** at the heart of decision-making, recognising that our work is ultimately to guide the next generation.

Our schools are embedded in their communities and sense of **community** is a responsibility as well as a value, embracing belonging, kindness, compassion, respect and the opportunities that brings.

Support is the rock upon which we choose to lean, to thrive, and the scaffolding we can give with humility to others, accepting that all of us need support at one time or another.

Integrity is central to our actions and means doing what we say we will do to stay authentic and encourage trust.

We always do the best we can to be genuine, non-judgmental and instil **pride** and we are proud of what we achieve and the difference we make.

COVER PICTURE: Children from Benedict Biscop scale the heights at their residential

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Trust-wide choir concert showcases working together



The second One Voice choir concert brought together all eight schools from across Northern Lights Learning Trust for a memorable evening of entertainment at Venerable Bede CE Academy.

Nearly 200 young performers, supported by a live band, showcased their talent along with two staff bands from the trust's two secondary schools, Venerable Bede and Ian Ramsey CE academies.

Additionally, accomplished pianists from Venerable Bede performed and Jess Dale (below), a teaching assistant from Benedict Biscop, wowed the audience with her rendition of Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You."



The concert, organised by Marie Crowe, head of school at Hart Primary, and Ruth Bonner, head of music at Venerable Bede, concluded with a well-deserved standing ovation from the 400-strong audience.

Chief executive Jo Heaton expressed her immense pride in the talent displayed from across the trust. She said: "What a special event that showed our unity, our strength together across all our schools and how we provide opportunities for our children and young people to be part of and experience.

"I'm so proud and so thankful to everyone who was there or worked towards this event - 'shining stronger together' and one wonderful voice."

Writing after the performance, one parent contacted the trust to say how much the concert had boosted their child's confidence. "She came out of the event on cloud nine, full of inspiration and can't wait for next year's already. We can't thank staff enough - you are amazing!" said the parent.

With the success of this year's One Voice, plans are already underway for next year's performance, promising an even bigger and better show.



'Outstanding' presentation wins £3,000 for St Helen's playground in Dragon's Den showdown

It was like TV's Dragon's Den – and children from St Helen's Primary School won over a grilling from the Teesside University panel and came away with funding worth £3,000.

The money will pay for a circular running track marked out on the playground plus pedal bikes, scooters, balance bikes, skateboards and helmets.

The school's journey with the Creating Active Schools Project started five months ago. The initiative looks at how active your school is and, along with some help from the project managers, they work alongside school staff to increase physical activity.

Six pupils went around each class to tell the children the ideas they had created and asked each child to vote for their favourite. A presentation was then prepared on the most popular idea – the circular running track.

"We went to Teesside University to present our idea to the four 'dragons'," said headteacher Marcus Newing. "The presentation was absolutely outstanding. The pupils spoke with confidence and a real belief that their idea would have a big impact on St Helen's Primary School pupils."

"The dragons loved it and generously agreed to fund the whole project."



About to face the dragons: St Helen's pupils at Teesside University

Trainee teachers are familiar faces at Venerable Bede

Venerable Bede CE Academy hosted an Initial Teacher Training day for primary phase trainees who are enrolled with the Northern Lights Teaching School Hub.

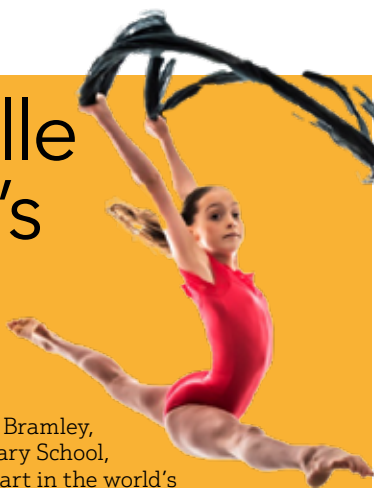
The day gave them an opportunity to explore secondary education, with a special focus on transition from primary to secondary.

Of the ten trainees, two were former pupils at Venerable Bede – who said they thoroughly enjoyed returning to school in a professional capacity.



Years 1 and 2 at Hart Primary School had a wonderful day on the beach, braving the weather and exploring rock pools. The children found multiple creatures, including star fish, crabs, mussels, anemones and periwinkles and learned lots about different habitats.

Annabelle in world's biggest dance



Talented dancer Annabelle Bramley, a Year 6 pupil at Hart Primary School, has been selected to take part in the world's biggest dance event performance.

Annabelle will be performing at the London event, called Move It, with her dance school K.R Dance on the main stage. She has been dancing since she was three years old and has won numerous competitions and championship titles for her dancing. Last summer Annabelle performed at the Sunderland Empire Theatre with the English Youth Ballet in a performance of Coppelia.

Holley Park find out about pop art



Year 2 at Holley Park Academy enjoyed finding out more about pop art. They were lucky enough to have artists in from Durham University, who helped them create their own pop art commission using inks and stencils.

A big welcome to Grange!

Grange Primary School has started a new chapter in its history, as it converted to academy status on Friday 1 March and formally joined Northern Lights Learning Trust.

We now comprise eight schools – primaries and secondaries – and over 3,500 children and young people in an area stretching from Teesside through to Wearside.

Headteacher Leanne Yates said: "We are delighted to be part of this growing organisation. An exciting new chapter in Grange Primary School's history has begun!"

Northern Lights Chief Executive, Jo Heaton, said: "We are delighted to welcome Grange Primary School, a great school which further strengthens Northern Lights and we look forward to working alongside them."



Photo shows, from left, Grange Primary School headteacher Leanne Yates, Northern Lights chief executive Jo Heaton, children from the school and co-chairs of governors James Sinclair and Anthony Degnan



Year 1 and 2 children at St Peter's Elwick CE Primary School had an exciting trip to the Hartlepool Headland – despite the weather! The young adventurers explored rock pools and learned about the habitats and different creatures that lived there. Children looked for interesting treasure on the beach and sang a fun penguin song.



Members of Ian Ramsey CE Academy's Trust Pupil Parliament – Damisi, Maria, Harrison, Amy and Erin – went to Hart Primary to launch the design-a-duck competition with their pupils. The idea is for all primary schools in Northern Lights to think up imaginative designs, which for fairness will be broken down into age group categories. Look out for winning entries in our next edition!



St Helen's are bright sparks

St Helen's Primary School have won this year's Bright Sparks Challenge, raising a record £1,675 for Alice House Hospice.

The challenge was to turn an initial £20 stake into as much money as possible. Fundraising activities included movie and pyjama nights, non-uniform days and good old fashioned raffles.

Headteacher Marcus Newing said: "A huge thank you to everyone involved - this will make a significant difference to the lives of many people in Hartlepool."

"We are so proud of our student council for leading this initiative for the first time at St.Helen's and also the pupils who participated in their own 'Do Something Sponsored' challenge."

Hart, another Northern Lights school, was last year's winner.



■ Hart Primary School's early years class had a blast at Lets Pretend as part of Careers Week. The children explored different potential careers through play - and had so much fun while learning, proving it's never too soon to think about life after school.

Secondaries learn horrors of the holocaust, Anne Frank inspiration

Twenty Year 8 pupils at Venerable Bede CE Academy became tour guides for an Anne Frank and World War II holocaust exhibition at the school.

They presented to Year 7 and their Year 8 peers the story of the remarkable German-born Jewish girl, who kept a diary in which she documented life in hiding under Nazi persecution during the German occupation of the Netherlands.

The school hosted a morning for the local community and churches, with more than 50 people attending. Among the visitors was Tony Wortman, of the Jewish community, who spoke after the tours had taken place.

Parents and carers attended a separate evening event.

"The pupils were a credit to the school," said Mrs Rebecca Scott, head of history at Venerable Bede. "I was

amazed by their knowledge and how they grew in confidence over the two weeks. Each and every one of them should be so proud of themselves."

Venerable Bede CE Academy pupils were presented with special certificates and now have the opportunity to become ambassadors of the Anne Frank Trust, taking part in events and visiting key historical sites such as Auschwitz and Anne Frank's house.



The presentation to the local community at Venerable Bede



■ Ian Ramsey CE Academy is "proud and delighted" that five of their pupils have been selected to be Anne Frank Ambassadors for the Anne Frank Trust UK. "This is an amazing achievement and we are really looking forward to following their journey as they work within school and the community," said headteacher Mal Patrick.



Cambridge call at Ian Ramsey

Year 10 pupils at Ian Ramsey CE Academy had a visit from Cambridge University students, hoping to inspire them into applying for a place at Cambridge in 2027.



Eucharist experience

KS2 children from St Peter's Elwick CE Primary School attended St Peter's church for the Eucharist Service. A big thank you to Reverend Janet for a wonderful service and to the children, who volunteered to read prayers.



Grange art on show

Grange Primary School were delighted to host their very first art exhibition featuring work from the Hartlepool artist Tom Stainthorpe. Artwork by pupils from Year 2, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 was also displayed. Headteacher Leanne Yates said: "We were amazed by the turnout at this event and can't wait for the next one. We are so proud of the amazing art created by our pupils."

They shoot and they score at Hart Primary

As part of National Careers Week, Hart Primary School asked pupils what they aspire to be when they grow up.

Many expressed an interest in becoming a footballer, so Premier League Referee, Tony Harrington – who is a parent at the school – and local female referee, Ellie Mason, came in to talk to the children.

Tony and Ellie explained what it takes to become a referee and what their role entails, including some exciting demonstrations and getting the children involved.

In addition, the school had more visitors from Hartlepool United FC, giving the children a rare opportunity to learn more about the range of careers there are in football.

Hannah Anderson (commercial sales), Danny O'Connor (physiotherapist), Josh Youll (media), Kevin Phillips (first team coach), and Louis Stephenson (footballer) gave us an explanation about their careers and how they got to where they are now.



The children also prepared some questions which they had answered!

Finding out about a career in football

"The children absolutely loved the assembly," said head of school Marie Crowe.



Some very special guests at St Helen's

Early Years children welcomed some special guests to St Helen's – and as our pictures show, weren't afraid of getting up close and

personal with creatures that some adults might run a mile from. Children then went looking to see if there were any more outside...

Fun and adventure at Benedict Biscop's residential



■ As our pictures show, Benedict Biscop's residential at Derwent Hill was filled with fun and adventure. Gorge walking, indoor and outdoor climbing, hiking – even splashing in puddles – all helped make lasting memories for the children.




Team Elwick are top

A selection of KS2 children from St Peter's Elwick CE Primary School travelled to Brierton Sports Centre to take part in the Year 6 Boys League 2 Cup football tournament.

"All the children played each game with fantastic enthusiasm, displaying excellent football skills and sportsmanship with each other and towards the other teams," said head of school Vikki Wilson.

"We won three and drew one, scoring some wonderful goals along the way. We achieved an amazing 10 points and came top in the event!"

"Well done Team Elwick we are so very proud of you."

A parent commented: "What a brilliant day. Best I've ever seen Team Elwick play. Super proud of them. Goals flying everywhere - fantastic passing, creating spaces and opportunities. Wow!"



Celebrating World Book Day at Grange

World Book Day celebrations at Grange Primary School were a fantastic success. To show their love of reading, the school organised reading raids, a "caught reading" competition and a visit from the Big Foot Events theatre company with the Wolf on Trial and Shakespeare Presents workshops.

The activities even made the front page of Hartlepool Life newspaper!



Looking to the future at Venerable Bede

Venerable Bede CE Academy invited a wide range of post-16 providers into school to speak to pupils. This was an informal event where pupils were able to gather information and ask questions about different career and job options.

While it was intended for Year 11, pupils from all year groups came along after school to take full advantage of this fantastic event.



Ian Ramsey's Lego win

The Ian Ramsey CE Academy team that took part in the first Lego League competition on Friday have scooped the 'Best of the Rest' award. This means they will now compete in the national finals against teams from all around the country.



Red nose mischief brings in £107

St Peter's Elwick CE Primary School would like to say thank you to the children for a fantastic Red Nose Day and for all the generous donations. The school raised a fantastic £107.44 for good causes.



Holley Park look at mental health

Year 5 at Holley Park Academy took part in an NHS Mental Health workshop.

Pupil voice action at Benedict Biscop

Benedict Biscop have set up a school netball team for boys and girls following pupil voice feedback.

The team train with Mrs Hansen and Mr Holt every week and have just started competing in the Sunderland Schools Netball League.

So far the team have won eight out of their ten games and have managed to qualify for this year's Sunderland schools' netball final. A great result!



Year 5 at Holley Park Academy are pictured reading their own stories that they had written with buddies to celebrate World Book Day.



Reception class at St Helen's Primary School enjoyed visiting St. Hilda's church to find out about the church and learn more about Holy Week.

DON'T YOU FEEL LIKE IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE?

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