

Simonside Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Hills



Friday 10th October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We were delighted to welcome Dame Chi Onwurah MP to school yesterday for a special visit, supporting our work in school on Black History Month. Dame Chi led an assembly for KS2 children and was then taken on a tour of the school by our new Simonside Prime Minister and her Deputy (their first official engagement!). The KS2 children really impressed Dame Chi with their knowledge and understanding. She was made to feel very welcome by everyone in school.



Our Rights Respecting Ambassadors and School Councillors are all in post and look very impressive with their lanyards! We have spoken to all the children in assemblies about how important pupil voice is – we need to **work as a team** to constantly strive for excellence.

Harvest Festival

We will be celebrating Harvest with the children on Thursday 23rd October. We would be grateful for any donations to our school Food Bank for this. We will make a display of all the food as a focus for our celebration assembly. Any donations of dried food would be very gratefully received. Thank you! If you, yourself, are in need of any items from our Food Bank please just let us know. Similarly, we have a huge amount of second-hand uniform – all free to take.

Road Safety



The staff from Callerton school are out every day to help keep everyone safe with the increase in traffic since the school opened. Please don't use the vehicle entrance as a pedestrian entrance/exit. We appreciate that it may be a longer way around but all pedestrians must use the pedestrian gate. We are just trying to avoid accidents from happening.

Punctuality and Attendance

This week, in particular, we have had a steady stream of children arriving late to school. Every time a child arrives late it causes an interruption to the teaching and the class teacher has to stop and recap what has



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been taught so far. Some classes are being interrupted multiple times which is disrupting learning. Please try to get your child to school on time. The gates close at 8:55am. Anyone arriving after this time is classed as 'late'.

Understanding absence percentages

You may wonder why a school would be concerned if your child's attendance is below 96%. This may make it easier to understand:

95% equates to half a day off every two weeks

90% equates to a day off every two weeks

85% equates to one and a half days off every two weeks

80% equates to one whole day off every week

A secondary age child whose attendance is 80% will have missed ONE WHOLE YEAR of education by the time they leave school

A child with 90% attendance or less is classified as a persistent absentee.

*Our overall attendance since the start of September is 93.7%. This has been affected by our poor weekly attendance this week of 92.6%. **We are keen to work with families** to identify any barriers affecting attendance. Please ring the office on every day of absence.*

We have had a number of children being collected very late after school requiring staff to supervise them. From now on, children who are not collected on time will be looked after by the after-school wraparound care provision. Please note that this will incur a fee of £7 per session, per child.



PACTs (Parent and Child Together)

Thank you to all the parents and carers who have attended the PACTs so far – and to the staff for preparing all the resources. These sessions are so valuable for understanding the work expectations in class and learning how you can support your child at home.

The stronger the link between home and school, the better for the child. Please continue to let us know if we can help in any way with concerns you may have. **We look forward to seeing you at the parents' evenings on the 16th and 21st of October** – please book your appointment on ParentMail.

Safeguarding

All the children in KS1 and KS2 have taken part in the NSPCC programme about **speaking out and staying safe**. Please talk to your children about this to keep the conversation going.



Permissions and Home School Agreement

You should have received an email on ParentMail with a link to a form asking for various different permissions e.g. use of photos on the website. We have had approximately 60% of parents complete this. It would be great if everyone could complete this as soon as possible please.

Have a wonderful weekend everyone.

Yours sincerely,

E. Hills

Mrs Hills
Head Teacher

