



**RISEDALE**  
A family of learners

**RISEDALE SCHOOL**

Headteacher: Mrs L Greenwood - BA (Dunelm), NPQH  
Hipswell, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire. DL9 4BD  
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[www.risedale.org.uk](http://www.risedale.org.uk) | @RisedaleSchool @RisedaleFamily

Thursday, 18th December 2025

Dear parent/carers,

**SUBJECT: Headteacher's Letter - December 2025**

With so much suffering and negativity in the world, it is easy to lose sight of the good that is everywhere. We hear of war, injustice, antisocial behaviour, poverty, abuse and oppression, and we can forget that where these things are happening, there are people working to help and bring light. At Christmas, it is important to reflect on the year we have had and remember moments of joy, kindness and success: moments of light.

In school, we have shared many of these moments over the term, including our annual presentation evening in October, our wonderful pupil-led Remembrance service in November, and the rewards assemblies and trips held this week to recognise those pupils who have demonstrated commitment to their learning, or who have shown our values of **RESPONSIBILITY**, **RESPECT**, **RESILIENCE** and **RELATIONSHIPS**.

However, we should also accept that learning and growth do not happen without failure, and it is human nature to be flawed. In school, we encourage pupils to develop resilience and to accept and learn from failure and each other's flaws, whilst striving to be the **BEST** we can be. As Leonard Cohen famously sang: *'there is a crack in everything; that's how the light gets in'*. We should take heart from this message and remember that there is light everywhere, even in our imperfections.

It is easy for young people to look at the world around them and conclude that it is too hard to share their light alongside their imperfections, and to decide to retreat into the online world more and more often. As school staff and parents, I hope that we can stand together to encourage our young people to live and interact more in the 'real world', owning their imperfections and sharing their light with others. It is my hope that, over the Christmas break, we all take time to talk and spend time with our families, minimising time online and maximising moments of human interaction and joy, whilst not forgetting to accept that there will always be imperfections and 'cracks', which will also let in light.

I wish you and your family a light-filled Christmas and a happy New Year. Thank you for your continued support and for being a part of the Risedale Family. We look forward to seeing our young people back in school, ready to learn, on 6th January 2026.

*Greenwood.*

**Mrs L Greenwood**  
Headteacher



## Dates for Your Diary

Monday 5 January 2026	Staff Training Day
Tuesday 6 January	Start of Spring Term 1 (pupils return)
12 - 30 January	Y11 GCSE PPEs (Mock Exams)
Wednesday 14 January	Y11 Consultation Evening (3:20pm – 5:20pm)
Thursday 22 January	Y9 Options Evening (6pm -7:30pm)
16 - 20 February	Half-Term Holiday
Monday 23 February	Start of Spring Term 2 (staff & pupils return)



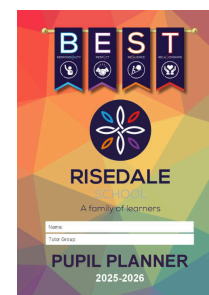
Website Page: [Calendar & Term Dates](#)

## Readiness for the Spring Term

Please ensure your child is ready for learning in January. If they need new items of uniform or equipment, please ensure these are purchased/replaced over the Christmas break. The planner is an essential tool for your child, and the school purchased these and issued them to every pupil in September/when they arrived. Please ensure that your child brings their planner back to school in January (replacement planners must be purchased if your child loses this - available for £2 on ParentPay).



We would like to remind families that, whilst the holidays can obviously be an opportunity for treats such as nail extensions/nail art or colouring hair, only natural nails and natural hair colours are permitted in school. Please ensure any acrylic nails, nail polish or hair dye (non-natural colours) are removed before pupils return to school.



Website Pages: [Uniform](#) | [Equipment](#) | [ParentPay](#)



## RISEDALE SCHOOL UNIFORM BANK



### Need Uniform?

- FREE, pre-loved items.
- Email your request to: [uniformbank@risedale.org.uk](mailto:uniformbank@risedale.org.uk)
- Include sizes needed!

### Want to Donate?

- Give back to other families.
- Drop off clean, washed uniform at the school reception.



Together, We Make A Difference!

### #TEAMRISEDALE



**Risedale's Uniform Bank** offers free, second-hand uniform to families. To request items, please email [uniformbank@risedale.org.uk](mailto:uniformbank@risedale.org.uk) with the sizes needed. We also welcome donations of clean, unwanted/preloved uniform at the school reception. Our Uniform Bank is a new venture, and stock is currently limited. We hope that with your help, this service will grow and become an invaluable resource for the Risedale Family.

## Reminders for Year 11 Pupils and Families:

**Y11 Consultation Evening: Wednesday, 14th January (3:20pm – 5:20pm).** Please read the letter for all the information you need to book your appointments using My Child at School (MCAS): <https://bit.ly/Y11ConsultEve140126>. The booking window is now OPEN and will CLOSE at 9am on Wednesday, 14th January 2026. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Mock Exams / Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs)** will be taking place from Monday, 12th January to Friday, 30th January 2026 for all our Year 11 pupils. These exams are essential preparation for the actual GCSE exams. Please read the following letter for all the information you need >> [Year 11 Mock Examinations \(PPEs\)](#)

**Leavers' Hoodies are ON SALE NOW.** No orders will be accepted after Friday, 6th February 2026, to ensure timely production. If you haven't ordered yours yet, don't miss out! Find out more here >> [Year 11 Leavers' Hoodies 2026](#)



## School Closures: Snow and Severe Weather

As winter progresses, adverse weather and snowfall may require the school to close, either for a full day or during the day. While most of our pupils live within walking distance, many staff live further afield, and maintaining safe pupil-to-staff ratios during severe weather can be difficult. We must always prioritise the health and safety of everyone on site.

In coordination with our local Catterick primary feeder schools, we will strive to make collaborative decisions regarding school closures and reopenings. However, in certain circumstances, individual schools may need to make independent decisions.

### Communication & Assumptions

- **Default Status:** Unless you receive a direct notification from us via the channels listed below, **please assume the school is OPEN as usual.**
- **Decision Timing:** We will let you know if school is closing for the day as early as we can.

### How We Communicate a Closure

In the event of a school closure, we will inform you via:

- Text / Email / MCAS
- School Website: [Emergency Announcements](#)
- Social Media: [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
- North Yorkshire Council: [School Closures](#)



### Telephone Use

Please **DO NOT telephone the school** to check the status. We try to keep these lines open so that staff can contact us to inform us of their situation. Please ensure we have an up-to-date mobile number for you.

### Mid-Day Closures

If the school closes during the day, we will send you a text message. Staff who live near the school will stay with children who cannot be picked up quickly.

### Remote Learning Expectations for Snow Days

If we announce a snow day closure, your child will be set work via Google Classroom for the timetabled lessons they have that day. We recommend, as far as possible, that your child sticks to the routine of their school day.

**Website Pages:** [Emergency Announcements](#) | [Remote Education](#)

## Attendance, Absence and Punctuality

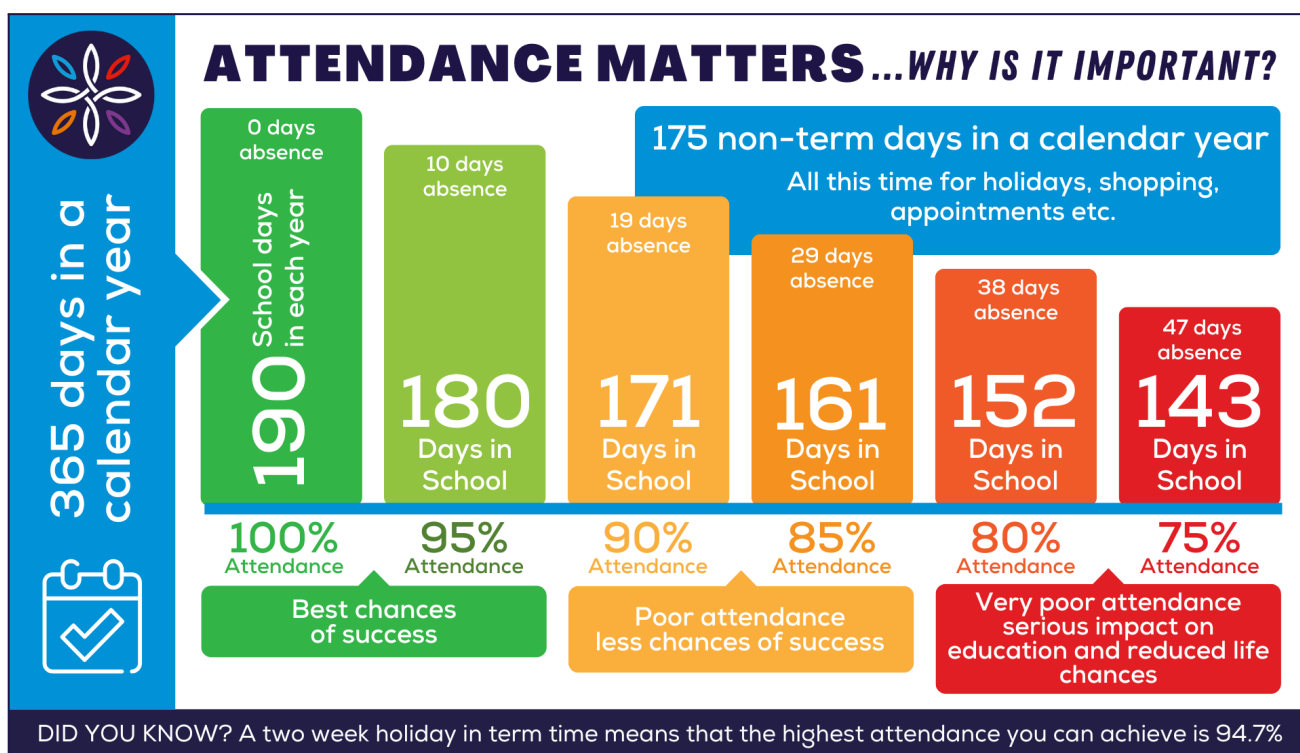
At Risedale, our primary goal is to ensure every pupil reaches their full academic and personal potential. A cornerstone of achieving this success is **consistent and punctual school attendance**.

We want to take this opportunity to reinforce just how vital daily attendance is, and how your partnership helps us create the best possible learning environment for your child.

### Why Every Day Truly Matters

Attendance is not simply about being present; it is about ensuring your child benefits from the cumulative, sequential nature of the curriculum.

- **Academic Continuity:** Every subject relies on a structured sequence of learning. Missing even one lesson can create a knowledge gap that makes subsequent learning frustrating and difficult. When a pupil is absent, they miss the direct instruction, classroom discussions, and immediate feedback that are irreplaceable.
- **Building Essential Skills:** School is the primary environment for developing crucial social-emotional skills. Consistent attendance fosters a sense of belonging, helps pupils maintain strong peer relationships, and allows them to practice teamwork, conflict resolution, and responsibility—all essential life skills.
- **Preparation for the Future:** Good attendance habits established now directly translate into success in sixth form/college, vocational training, and the workplace, where reliability and punctuality are mandatory.



### Understanding the Impact of Missed Time

The cumulative effect of seemingly small, occasional absences can be significant over a school year. 1 day of absence is 5 lessons missed, 25 lessons over 1 week and 50 lost lessons over two weeks.



From January, we will be launching a new attendance strategy, and your support with this is crucial. You will receive more regular attendance updates, and all tutors will receive weekly attendance figures to share with their tutees. We will be sharing successes and rewarding improved attendance with initiatives like the '1% Better' report card, rewarding weekly streaks and the '100% Club'. We ask that you support the school by fostering a resilient attitude towards attending school and encouraging your child to attend school every day.

**Website Page:** [Attendance, Absence and Punctuality](#)

## Child Protection and Safeguarding

While the holidays are a time for joy and relaxation, we also want to take this opportunity to share some **important safeguarding reminders** to ensure all our children remain safe and happy until we return in the New Year.

### Online Safety: Staying Switched On

The holidays often mean more time spent online, potentially with new devices received as gifts. Please ensure you have conversations with your child about:

- **Sharing Personal Information:** Remind children **never** to share personal details, passwords, or photos with people they don't know in real life.
- **Privacy Settings:** Check that all new devices, games, and social media accounts have the strongest possible privacy settings enabled.
- **Age Limits:** Be aware of and adhere to the age restrictions for games and apps. If an app has a **16+** rating, it is for a reason.
- **Screen Time:** Help children manage a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

### Staying Safe in the Community

The Christmas period can sometimes mean changes to routines and more time out and about.

- **'Think and Check' Rule:** Remind children of the importance of checking with a trusted adult before going anywhere with someone, or if plans change unexpectedly.
- **Stranger Awareness:** Reiterate the message that children should **never** go off with or accept gifts/rides from people they don't know, no matter how friendly they seem.
- **Road Safety:** If visiting friends or relatives, or shopping, reinforce the need to be extra vigilant around roads and busy car parks.

The safety and wellbeing of our pupils is our top priority. If you have any concerns regarding Child Protection or Safeguarding, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs Cox, immediately at [DSLsafeguarding@risedale.org.uk](mailto:DSLsafeguarding@risedale.org.uk).

In Mrs Cox's absence, please contact one of our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs): Mr Yates, Miss Burke or Lisa Smith.

### Out-of-School Support

We understand that concerns may arise outside of school hours, including during the Christmas holiday. For access to important information and contact details for relevant agencies, please visit our dedicated website page.

**Website Page:** [Safeguarding](#)

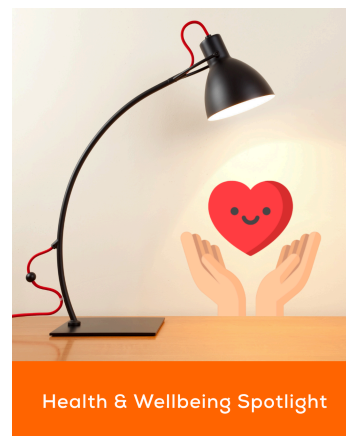


## Health & Wellbeing Spotlight: Festive Season Tips

From our School Counsellor, Lisa Smith

As we approach the holidays, it's important to remember that wellbeing looks different for everyone. Whether you love the festivities or find this time of year challenging, looking after yourself is key. The Charlie Waller Trust has put together some practical tips on looking after your mental health this winter—from getting enough sleep to respecting your own need for space. Additionally, there are helpful links provided for accessing further support if needed.

Charlie Waller Trust Link: [Wellbeing in the Festive Season](#)



## We Need YOU!

### Join Our New PTA and Make a Difference

We're putting out a fresh and urgent call for more parents and carers to join our new **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**! We are excited to get this group up and running, but we need **more hands** to make it a success. The PTA is a fantastic way for us to work together, enriching our school community and enhancing the experience for all our pupils.

#### How You Can Help:

The PTA is your chance to directly contribute to our school community. We are looking for enthusiastic individuals to help us with everything from **planning fun school events** to **supporting essential fundraising efforts**. By joining, you can:

- **Make a real difference** to the resources & opportunities available to our pupils/your children
- **Connect with other parents** and build a stronger network
- **Be a voice for your child** and help shape their school experience.

Whether you have a lot of time to give or just a little, your contribution would be invaluable.

Let's work together to help every pupil be the **BEST** version of themselves, embodying our school's values of **RESPONSIBILITY**, **RESPECT**, **RESILIENCE**, and **RELATIONSHIPS**.

### Ready to Get Involved?

If you're interested in learning more or would like to be involved, please email us today at [PTA@risedale.org.uk](mailto:PTA@risedale.org.uk).

#TeamRisedale

# Job Vacancies at Risedale School

## Caretaker and Groundsperson

- **Salary/Grade:** £25,989 - £27,254 / Grade E Points 6 to 9
- **Contract:** Established / Full Year / Full Time
- **Hours:** 37 hours per week
- **Start Date:** As soon as possible
- **Closing Date:** 23:59 Thursday, 08th January 2026
- **Interview Date:** W/C 12th January 2026

**APPLY TODAY:** [Caretaker and Groundsperson](#)

## Safeguarding Support Officer

- **Salary/Grade:** £23,626.41 - £25,195.49 pro rata'd salary (£27,254 - £29,064.00 full-time equivalent salary) / Pay Grade F Point 09-13
- **Contract:** Established / Term time only plus 1 week
- **Hours:** 37 hours per week
- **Start Date:** February 2026
- **Closing Date:** 23:59 Sunday, 11th January 2026
- **Interview Date:** Monday, 19th January 2026

**APPLY TODAY:** [Safeguarding Support Officer](#)

## Food and Art Technician

- **Salary/Grade:** £12,781.15 - £13,396.09 Pro Rata (£24,796.00 - £25,989.00 FTE) Pay Grade CD (Points 3-6)
- **Contract:** Permanent / Term time only - 38 weeks, plus 5 training days
- **Hours:** 22-22.5 hours per week, 3 days per week (days to be negotiated)
- **Start Date:** After February Half-Term Holiday
- **Closing Date:** 23:59 Thursday, 22nd January 2026
- **Interview Date:** Week commencing 2nd February 2026

**APPLY TODAY:** [Food and Art Technician](#)

## Head of Faculty - Technology

- **Salary/Grade:** Main/ Upper Pay Scale + TLR1
- **Contract:** Full Time / Established / Permanent
- **Start Date:** 14 April 2026 (After Easter Holiday)
- **Closing Date:** 23:59 Thursday, 22nd January 2026
- **Interview Date:** Week commencing 26th January 2026

**APPLY TODAY:** [Head of Faculty - Technology](#)

Completed application forms should be emailed to [jobs@risedale.org.uk](mailto:jobs@risedale.org.uk) or alternatively can be posted to Mrs L Greenwood, Headteacher, Risedale School, Hipswell, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire DL9 4BD.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The school will not accept referrals/CVs from supply or employment agencies for this post.



**RISEDALE SCHOOL**  
A family of learners

**Apply Today**

**4 JOB VACANCIES**

Caretaker and Groundsperson  
Food and Art Technician  
Head of Faculty - Technology  
Safeguarding Support Officer



#TEAMRISEDALE ❤️💜💙💚

# Community Notices

## Free Eye Tests For Children! 🕶️

This important message is from **North Yorkshire Council's Public Health Team**:

**Please take your child for a FREE eye test.** All children under 16 are entitled to a free NHS eye test at an optician.

- Read the leaflet for more details: [Eye Test Leaflet 2025](#).
- Check this website to find your local opticians: [Sight Tests - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)



**Has your child had their eyes tested yet?**

This leaflet provides important information on looking after your child's eyes and booking an eye test for children

**When should you get your child a free eye test?**  
Ideally children should start having regular eye tests from the age of 4. But they can be tested at any age, even if they can't read or speak.

**How do you book a free child's eye test?**  
Please book your child an eye test at an opticians, even if you have no concerns about their vision. To do this contact your local opticians - use this link for local practices [Find an optician - NHS](#).

**What will it cost?**  
**Children under 16 are entitled to NHS-funded (FREE) eye tests.** If your child needs glasses, they will receive a voucher to **help with the cost**.

**Why should you get your child's eyes tested?**

- ✓ Being able to see clearly will mean your child is able to learn and develop at school and socially.
- ✓ Eyes are still developing in early childhood. An eye test helps pick up and treat any problems. This can help to **prevent** longer-term eye problems.
- ✓ Even if you think your child has normal vision it is still important to get their eyes tested.
- ✓ They are no longer tested in school.

**Children in North Yorkshire should visit an optician for a free eye test**

**How can you tell if your child has an eye problem?**  
Some eye problems don't show any signs, so it is always best to **take your child for an eye test**.

Signs of a possible eye problem can include:

- having one eye that turns in or out
- difficulty concentrating
- behavioural problems
- headaches
- rubbing their eyes a lot
- sitting too close to the TV
- screwing up/closing one or both eyes
- holding things close to them

An eye test is very **important** especially if there's a **history** of early glasses use, childhood **eye problems**, **squint** or **lazy eye**, in your family.

**Did you know?**  
Short-sightedness is on the rise and has been linked to a range of factors including **screen use**. Help your child's eyes stay healthy by **managing screen use** and encouraging them to **get outside often** (this helps their eyesight).

**More Information:**

- NHS information: [nhs.uk/conditions/eye-tests-in-children/](#)
- Find an optician: [Find an optician - NHS](#)
- Information on Vision/Eye tests **Humber and North Yorkshire ICB**
- Information on Vision/Eye tests for families in **Craven, West Yorkshire ICB**
- Looking After Your Children's Eyes - **College of Optometrists**
- Children's eye health - **Association of Optometrists**

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Please encourage all children and young people to manage their screen time and get outdoors more often—this simple step is a great way to help protect their eyesight!

## Opportunity to Shape Future SEND Support

We would like to draw your attention to an important opportunity for parents, carers, and staff to contribute to the future of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support in our schools.

The Department for Education, in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children, is hosting a series of regional engagement events across the country. These sessions are designed to gather the views and lived experiences of families and professionals to help inform the upcoming Schools White Paper.



**Local Engagement Event:** A regional event is taking place locally in **Darlington** on **Thursday, 8th January 2026** (12:30pm – 2:30pm).

This is a valuable chance to speak directly with expert advisors and ensure that future reforms are grounded in the real-world experiences of our community.

**How to Attend:** Places are free but must be booked in advance. To view the full list of dates (including Leeds and Manchester) and to register your attendance, please visit the [Council for Disabled Children website here](#).

## FREE 'Life Chat' Opportunity!

We are sharing [this notice](#) from North Yorkshire Council's Trailblazer Project.

They are offering 'Life Chats' to help:

- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Create a tailored action plan for future steps.
- Boost wellbeing and open new doors!

Book your call now and start shaping your future!

**Email:** [Skillsandcareers@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Skillsandcareers@northyorks.gov.uk)

**Call:** 01609 536 066 and ask for the Trailblazer team

## Redeem your vouchers for FREE holiday activities with food this Christmas 🎅

We have issued FEAST vouchers to all families whose children receive benefits-related free school meals. These vouchers entitle your child to free places on FEAST activities this Christmas holiday, where they'll also receive a free healthy meal. You should have received your voucher via email or text from a platform called HolidayActivities.

If you haven't yet redeemed your voucher, please do so as soon as possible to book your child's place on the great activities happening locally.

If you believe your child is eligible and you have not yet received your voucher, or you have misplaced it, please contact the school office before the end of term.

To learn more about FEAST, including activities, eligibility and how to manage your bookings, please visit the FEAST website: [What is FEAST - North Yorkshire Together](#)



### Do you want to take small steps to make some big changes ?

We are here to help you take the next step with support, guidance, and opportunities tailored just for you.

*Get in touch today for an opportunity to arrange a 'life chat'*



Education



Empowerment



Employability



Volunteering



Wellbeing



Email: [skillsandcareers@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:skillsandcareers@northyorks.gov.uk)  
Call: 01609 536 066 and ask for the Trailblazer team



YORK & NORTH YORKSHIRE



Funded by  
UK Government

This project is supported by York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, using funding from the Department for Work and Pensions' Get Britain Working Economic Inactivity Trailblazer.

# feast

## Holidays

### just got better



Looking for something fun to do in the school holidays? FEAST has got you covered!

There's sports, art, food and loads more going on. If you're 16 or under and live in North Yorkshire, you can join in on the action, with free places for those who get benefits-related free school meals.

Get involved, try something new, and make the most of your holidays!

Discover what's on offer at [feastny.org](https://feastny.org)



NORTH YORKSHIRE TOGETHER



HolidayActivities



Funded by  
UK Government



NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

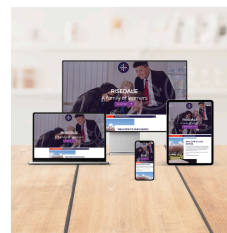


SCAN ME

# General Reminders for Risedale School

## School Website

It is recommended that all parents familiarise themselves with the school's website [www.risedale.org.uk](http://www.risedale.org.uk). There, you can find lots of important information such as [calendar and term dates](#), [letters to parents](#), [uniform](#), [policies](#), [exam information](#), [wellbeing](#) and our [latest news](#), to name but a few.



## Uniform

At Risedale, we take great pride in our school uniform and strive to make it as affordable as possible by limiting the number of branded items we offer. Our website provides guidance on the [Uniform](#) policy, which is an integral part of our school's identity. It is mandatory for all pupils to wear the correct uniform at all times. If you have any questions or concerns about the uniform, please contact your child's form tutor as the primary point of contact.



## Online Parental Engagement

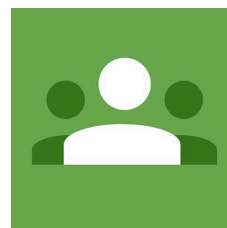
[MyChildAtSchool \(MCAS\)](#) is an online portal for parents that enables you to view your child's performance at school in real-time via the web. **Please check MCAS regularly** as this facility allows you to access your child's timetable, attendance, behaviour and reports whenever you wish to see the latest available information. Parents can access MCAS via the website or can use the MCAS App, which can be downloaded from the App/Google Play Store.



When your child joins Risedale, you will be sent details to allow you to access your account. If you have forgotten your Parent Login details, click [HERE](#).

## Google Classroom Parent Alerts

Parents can receive email summaries showing their child's progress in Google Classroom. To become a 'Google Guardian', simply complete the ['Google Classroom Summary Alerts'](#) form, and our IT team will set this up for you.



## Equipment and Chromebooks

Please ensure your child has everything they need for school to start the day positively and be prepared to learn.

- A pencil case containing the following:
  - a **black biro**, **red biro** and **blue biro**,
  - pencil
  - ruler
  - eraser
- Planner (replacement cost £2 if lost).
- PE kit (on timetabled day for PE).
- Reading book (KS3 only).
- Chromebook fully charged and in its protective case (Years 8-11 only).

