



RISEDALE

A family of learners

Keep In Touch

KIT Newsletter

February 2025





Dear parents/carers and pupils,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. As we continue through the school year at pace, it is important to take the time to reflect on all the achievements in our wonderful school.

I am delighted that our girls have been recognised for participating in sporting and computing initiatives recently that challenge gender stereotypes. As a school, we will be doing more to champion equality and diversity and challenge prejudice.

Many pupils enjoyed meeting Rishi Sunak MP when he visited Risedale at the beginning of February and I was immensely proud of the pupils who engaged in conversation with him maturely - they were great ambassadors for the school!

This half-term, we will launch our brand new school vision and values which have been shaped by all stakeholders: governors, staff, pupils and parents. These will form the basis of everything we do in school as they reflect what we all said we want to be about here at Risedale.

Whilst learning is always our main focus at school, we continue to prioritise the well-being and personal development of our pupils. If you have any concerns, or suggestions, or simply want to discuss your child's progress, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. If you have a specific query about your child's learning, please contact the relevant teacher or Head of Department; all other queries should go initially to your child's Form Tutor.

This is our 40th KIT Newsletter! Our first issue was published in April 2020 as a way to 'Keep In Touch' during the COVID lockdown. It has now developed into the half-termly celebration newsletter we have today. Please enjoy reading it and let us know if there is anything we can do to support you and your family.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Lucy Greenwood - Headteacher

#TeamRisedale 



Risedale Girls Excel in CyberFirst Competition



Risedale School's Computing department was thrilled to participate in the CyberFirst Girls Competition, a nationwide initiative run by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). The CyberFirst Girls Competition aims to inspire girls interested in technology to pursue a career in cyber security.

Open to all Year 8 girls, the competition presented a series of engaging online challenges designed to test their computational thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Despite being newcomers to the competition, the Risedale team displayed remarkable enthusiasm and strong camaraderie. The girls tackled the challenges enthusiastically and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, gaining valuable cybersecurity-related skills along the way.

"I am incredibly proud of our girls and their immense effort and determination. They truly embraced the challenge with incredible enthusiasm and a fantastic spirit," commented Mrs Rodgers, Head of Computer Science and IT. ***"Their teamwork, creativity, and resilience were truly inspiring."***

All pupils were awarded Epraise house points and received certificates of commendation.

Mrs Rodgers added, ***"We can't wait for November when the next cohort of Year 8 girls will have the opportunity to embrace this exciting challenge!"***

STEM, which encompasses Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, is crucial for innovation and progress in today's world. However, women are significantly underrepresented in these fields. Promoting girls' interest and participation in STEM is vital to ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the needs of our society. Risedale School is always striving to promote STEM subjects, particularly for girls, and this competition provided a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to explore this exciting field.

On Instagram, [CyberFirst Yorkshire](#) commented, *"Fantastic work girls! 🎉 We're so proud of your amazing effort and teamwork during the CyberFirst Girls Competition! 🖥️🔒 It's inspiring to see you embrace the world of cybersecurity with such determination. 🙌"*

Girls' Football News 🏈



Risedale Girls' Football Team Triumphs in Penalty Shootout Drama

In a thrilling cup fixture on Tuesday 21st January, one of Risedale School's talented girls' football teams, captained by Isabelle Dagnall (11Houlgate), battled for victory against Richmond School. The match was a closely contested affair, showcasing exceptional skill and sportsmanship from both sides.

Paige Doak (11Dunphy) scored a fantastic goal for Risedale, while goalkeeper Ava Hughes-Francis (10Sandell) made some truly spectacular saves to keep the score level. At full-time, the score remained 1-1, sending the match into a nail-biting penalty shootout.

"The tension was electric," said Mr Lawson, Head of PE at Risedale School. *"The penalty shootout was so nerve-wracking that some of our girls couldn't bear to watch."*

Ellie-Mae Reid (9Lawson) and Kai-Leigh Paige (11Houlgate) showed nerves of steel during the penalty shootout, while Ava Hughes-Francis continued her heroics between the posts, ultimately securing Risedale's victory.

"It was an incredible match," enthused Mr Lawson. *"The girls played with such heart and determination throughout the entire game. They are a credit to the school and the entire Risedale Family."*

Alumni Spotlight: Grace Baker Continues to Shine in the Performing Arts ★

Former Risedale School pupil Grace Baker, now studying at Richmond School and Sixth Form College, continues to impress with her exceptional talent in the performing arts.

Grace recently achieved a remarkable score of 94/100 in her LAMDA Level 2 Award in Musical Theatre (Grade 5), resulting in a well-deserved Distinction. This outstanding achievement follows her previous success in achieving a Distinction in a prior LAMDA exam while at Risedale.

LAMDA exams are renowned for their rigorous standards and focus on developing essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and self-confidence through the creative avenues of literature, drama, and music.



Grace's dedication and hard work are evident in this latest accomplishment. Everyone at Risedale congratulates her on this significant milestone and wishes her continued success in her future endeavours.

Grace continues to excel in the performing arts, actively participating in local theatre productions and honing her skills at the Charlotte Jacqueline School of Dance.

During her time at Risedale, Grace was a vibrant member of the school community. She consistently participated in music and drama performances, culminating in a leading role as Dorothy in the school's dazzling amateur production of "The Wizard of Oz" in July 2024. Her brother Oscar also gave a memorable performance as the Cowardly Lion in the same production. Grace's talents were further recognised when she received both the Drama and Music Key Stage 4 Excellence Awards at the school's Presentation Evening. Grace was also a valued Lead Senior Pupil Ambassador at Risedale.

On hearing of Grace's achievements, Mrs Cox, Head of the Creative Arts Faculty and Senior Teacher, said, ***"We are so proud of Grace. She was an absolute shining star during her time at Risedale, and it's no surprise that she continues to shine now. Grace was such a dedicated pupil of Risedale School. She loved her time here, and we loved having her. Such an asset. Kind, considerate, talented, dedicated – what more could you ask for?"***

Mrs Cox added, ***"Well done, Grace, on your amazing LAMDA Distinction! We can't wait to see what the future has in store for you. Good luck from the whole Risedale Family!"***

PHOTO CREDIT: Charlotte Jacqueline School of Dance

Emily-Faye Fort: Choir “Hero of the Week”

During a Service Children's Community Choir rehearsal on Wednesday 29th January, Risedale School pupil Emily-Faye Fort (10Vizor) was awarded a "Hero of the Week" certificate.

Emily-Faye's exceptional leadership skills shone through during rehearsals when she took charge and led the choir with clapping rhythms and routines during a break in the singing.

The Service Children's Community Choir provides a supportive and inclusive environment for children from military families to express their love of music. Emily-Faye's achievement highlights the talent and dedication of young musicians within the community and showcases the positive impact of music education.



Alumni Spotlight: Charli Wilkins Writing Success

Risedale School is thrilled to congratulate alumna Charli Wilkins on her recent writing award from Darlington College's Gifted Writers' group.

Charli, a former pupil at Risedale, was recognised for her exceptional submissions to the College's writing group, showcasing her creativity and dedication to the craft. Her work, along with other talented writers, is being considered for inclusion in a forthcoming anthology, a testament to the high calibre of writing being produced.



Charli's achievements highlight the strong foundation in English and creative writing she received here at Risedale. Her success serves as an inspiration to current pupils, demonstrating the potential that lies within each of them. We're incredibly proud of Charli and wish her continued success in her writing endeavours.

"We are absolutely delighted for Charli," said Miss Roberts, Senior Teacher and Head of English at Risedale School. ***She was always a talented writer with a gift for storytelling, and it's wonderful to see her continuing to excel. This award is a well-deserved recognition of her hard work and passion."***

Risedale encourages all pupils to explore their talents and pursue their passion for writing. Congratulations Charli, well done from the entire Risedale Family!

PHOTO CREDIT: Darlington College

Risedale Year 10 Boys Display Grit in Thirsk Basketball Match 🏀

The Risedale School Year 10 boys' basketball team travelled to Thirsk School & Sixth Form College on Thursday 30th January, for a hard-fought match. While Thirsk ultimately secured the win, Team Risedale demonstrated exceptional resilience, battling back and forth throughout. The team's performance showcased their growing strength and tactical development in each quarter.



"It was fantastic to see the boys put into practice what they've been learning in our lessons and take their tactical play to the next level," commented Head of PE, Mr Lawson. ***"I'm incredibly proud of their effort and performance. Well done boys!"***

Risedale Pupil Referees Schools Rugby Finals at Kingston Park 🏉

Risedale School pupil, Toby-George Clarke (11Hill), recently took the next step in his refereeing journey. The Year 11 pupil, who plays for the Catterick Crusaders RLC, officiated at the Year 8 Champion Schools Finals Afternoon at Kingston Park Stadium, Newcastle upon Tyne, on Monday 3rd February.



Toby-George's passion for Rugby League extends beyond playing. His dedication led him to complete a Match Officials course at Kingston Park, hosted by the Newcastle Rugby Foundation, where he successfully qualified. This prestigious appointment at the Champion Schools Finals was a testament to Toby-George's hard work and commitment.

Before the event, Catterick Crusaders RLFC shared the exciting news on their social media, praising Toby-George and thanking Risedale for their support in releasing him for the afternoon. The club's post stated, ***"Have a great afternoon on the next step of your journey TG! We are sure he'll make you all proud."***

At Risedale School, we believe in supporting our pupils' extracurricular activities and nurturing their passion for sport. Therefore, we were thrilled to support Toby-George in this endeavour. ***"We are incredibly proud of Toby-George's achievement. His dedication to rugby, both as a player and now as a referee, is truly commendable. This experience at the Champion Schools Finals was a fantastic opportunity for him, and we know he represented Risedale School brilliantly."***

This experience provided invaluable experience for the young referee as he continues to develop his skills and contribute to the sport he loves.

Well done Toby-George. Keep up the fantastic work!

Risedale School Celebrates Completing Leading National Gender Inclusion Programme in Computer Science



We're proud to announce that Risedale School has been recognised for our commitment to encouraging gender inclusion in Computer Science by the National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE). We've successfully completed the national 'I Belong: Encouraging Girls into Computer Science Programme', demonstrating our commitment to encouraging girls into Computer Science and improving the gender balance within the subject. The 'I Belong' certificate is awarded by the NCCE, a leading body for computing education in England.

Risedale School Headteacher, Mrs Greenwood, said: ***"Encouraging more girls to explore pathways into STEM-based careers is not only a national and international priority, it is a school priority. I am passionate about the empowerment of young women and this wonderful programme supports them to consider computer science in a different light, raises awareness of gender balance in STEM subjects and champions equality. Respect is at the heart of equality and that is what we wish to nurture at Risedale."***

Head of Computer Science at Risedale, Mrs Rodgers, said: ***"I've always been passionate about encouraging more girls to pursue Computing and receiving the I Belong certificate is a tremendous honour and a testament to our ongoing commitment to inclusion through***



technology. This achievement marks an important step, but our work doesn't end here. I'm confident that together, we can continue to make a meaningful impact and drive greater gender balance in Computing and STEM."

We successfully completed all aspects of the programme to achieve the I Belong programme certificate. The evidence-informed programme signposts to a range of activities and approaches most likely to support girls' engagement with the subject.

Katherine Ellis, Gender Inclusion Lead at the NCCE, said: ***"Congratulations to Risedale School on this accomplishment! Schools play a crucial part in addressing the gender gap in computer science education and related careers. This school is among others leading the way in understanding the issue and creating change at a local level. This certificate recognises the efforts the school has gone to, to support and empower all students, especially girls, in choosing this path."***

Established in 2018 and funded by the Department for Education, the NCCE has been instrumental in advancing computing education across schools in England, providing professional development courses, resources, and guidance to enhance teaching and learning.

Careers Cafe: Opening Doors to a World of Inspiring Futures



PHOTO L-R: Mrs Porritt (Careers Leader), guest speaker Nicola Stannard (HR & Recruitment Manager) and Mrs Harris (Careers Advisor).

Risedale School has launched a new Careers Cafe, a valuable resource for pupils of all year groups. Held every Tuesday lunchtime in the library, the cafe offers a fantastic opportunity to explore various industries and gain inspiration for future careers.

The session held on Tuesday 4th February, featured guest speaker Nicola Stannard, an HR & Recruitment Manager from the North East, who shared invaluable insights into the hiring process. Pupils had the opportunity to engage in an informal Q&A with Nicola, covering everything from writing compelling CVs to mastering interview techniques. She highlighted what employers look for, advising pupils on how to effectively showcase their skills and experience. Nicola also demystified the interview process, offering practical advice on preparation, expected questions, and making a positive impression. A key focus of her talk was apprenticeships, where she outlined the benefits and pathways available to pupils post-16.

"The Careers Cafe is an invaluable experience for our pupils," said Mrs Porritt, Careers Leader at Risedale School. ***"As a new venture for Risedale, we're thrilled to see so many pupils getting involved. Having a Recruitment specialist like Nicola share her expertise directly with our pupils is incredibly beneficial, giving them a real advantage as they consider their future careers."***

Nicola Stannard commented, ***"I was so impressed by the enthusiasm and insightful questions from the pupils at Risedale's Careers Cafe. It's clear they're really thinking about their futures, and it was a pleasure to share my experience with such an engaged group. I'm also looking forward to coming back soon to work with the Year 10 pupils on mock interviews – it's a great way for them to practise and get feedback."***

Careers Advisor Mrs Harris added, ***"In the coming weeks, we're excited to be hosting guest speakers from a range of professions. Some will visit in person, while others will join us online. We have professionals from the world of Marketing, Photography, and Finance lined up, to name just a few. Watch this space!"***

Risedale School is committed to providing a comprehensive Careers, Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) programme, and the Careers Cafe is a prime example. Our commitment is further demonstrated through other CEIAG initiatives such as our work experience programmes, mock interviews, and our annual Careers Fair. The school recognises the importance of preparing pupils for their future and strives to create opportunities for them to explore their interests and develop the skills necessary for success in further education and the world of work.

You can find out more about our CEIAG programme, including upcoming Careers Cafe events, by visiting our dedicated webpage: [Careers](#)

Poetry Success: Young Writers Shine!

We are thrilled to announce the results of our latest poetry competition, "The Beautiful Truth"! This year, our talented pupils were challenged to submit a poem that reflects their personal truth, exploring themes of identity, resilience, and hope. And wow, did they rise to the occasion!

29 outstanding poems by Risedale pupils have been selected for publication by Young Writers in their latest poetry anthology. Each piece offers a glimpse into the unique experiences and perspectives of these budding poets, showcasing their creativity and passion.

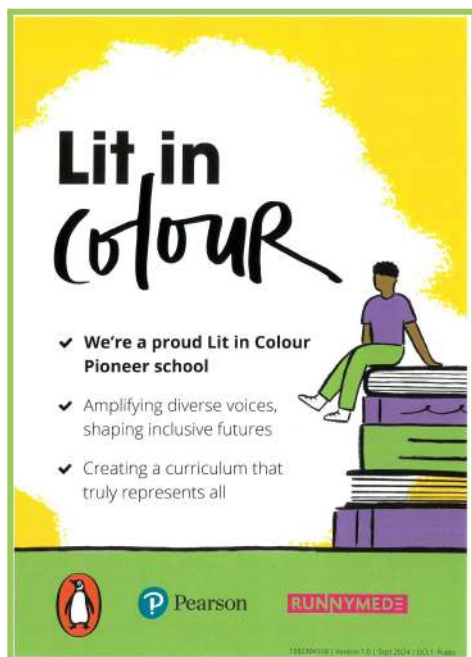
Teacher of English and Media Studies, Miss Douglas, expressed her pride by stating, ***"I am incredibly proud of each and every pupil who took the time and care to craft their poem! It is such an achievement to have their work published; they should all be so proud of themselves!"***



We can't wait for everyone to read these inspiring works. Look out for the anthology, which will be available in the school library soon!

On Facebook, [Young Writers](#) commented, ***"What an incredible achievement, well done to everyone! 😊"***

'Lit in Colour' Accreditation for Excellence in Diversity



We're incredibly proud to announce that Risedale School has received the prestigious "Lit in Colour" accreditation, recognising our outstanding commitment to diversifying our English curriculum.

This achievement highlights our pioneering role in the Lit in Colour Programme, an initiative dedicated to amplifying diverse voices and ensuring our curriculum truly represents all pupils.

The "Excellence for Diversifying the English Curriculum" accreditation celebrates our dedication to inclusivity and representation. By embracing a wide range of authors and perspectives, we have created an enriching learning environment where every pupil feels seen and valued.

"We are incredibly honoured to receive this recognition," said Miss Roberts, Senior Teacher and Head of English at Risedale. ***"At Risedale, we believe***

that literature has the power to learn about our own identities; connect us with others; challenge our perspectives, and foster empathy. By diversifying our curriculum, we are not only exposing our pupils to a wider range of stories but also equipping them with the tools to navigate the world around them."

Pearson's Lit in Colour Programme, in partnership with Penguin and The Runnymede Trust, aims to address the underrepresentation of authors of colour in schools. Through resources, training, and support, the programme empowers schools like ours to build more inclusive and representative learning experiences.

★ Risedale Cheerleaders: Dallas Bound! ★

The excitement is palpable at Risedale School as three of its most dedicated athletes, Eva Langdale (10Vizor), and sisters Lacey Hanson (11Dunphy) and Sienna Hanson (9Lawson), prepare to make their mark on the international cheerleading stage once again! These remarkable young women are set to represent Lazer Cheer of Catterick Garrison at the prestigious NCA All-Star National Championship 2025 in Dallas, Texas, a competition that draws the best of the best from across the globe.

Their journey to Dallas is the culmination of years of hard work, unwavering dedication, and a shared passion for cheerleading. Prior to their upcoming trip, they had already achieved international acclaim by securing gold medals as part of the Team England squad at the World Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, Florida, in April 2024.



The NCA All-Star National Championship is one of the largest and most competitive cheerleading events in the United States, providing an unparalleled platform for these athletes to showcase their exceptional abilities. During their stay in Texas, the girls will have the unique opportunity to train at renowned cheerleading gyms, learning from industry leaders and potentially meeting their cheerleading idols. This experience promises to be both exhilarating and educational, fostering their growth as athletes and individuals.

Before their departure, the girls gave a showcase performance on Sunday 23rd February at Lazer Cheer Catterick, where they wowed the audience with their perfectly executed routines, demonstrating the skill and comradery of the team. The event allowed friends, family, and supporters to witness firsthand the talent and dedication that these young athletes possess.

The team will fly out to Dallas to compete from 28th February to 2nd March 2025. As they prepare for this monumental opportunity, the entire Risedale family is rallying behind them, offering unwavering support and encouragement. Their participation in the NCA All-Star National Championship is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and exceptional talent.

A big thank you to proud Mum, Mrs Kathryn Hanson, for the fantastic photo! ❤️

Year 9 Football Team Triumph Over Bedale in Cup Clash

On Tuesday 25th February 2025, the Risedale Year 9 football team delivered a commanding performance against Bedale High School, securing a 5-2 victory in the cup away fixture. The final scoreline reflected Risedale's dominance, despite a brief scare in the middle of the match.



Risedale started with intensity, immediately pressing Bedale's defence. Liam Smith's powerful run through the midfield drew a foul in the penalty area, earning Risedale an early opportunity. Smith coolly converted the resulting penalty, sending the Bedale goalkeeper the wrong way and giving his team a deserved lead.

For much of the first half, Risedale controlled possession and dictated the tempo. However, Bedale proved dangerous on the counterattack, managing to score twice on either side of the halftime break, briefly putting Risedale behind.

This setback spurred Risedale into action. Matthew Senivota rose to the occasion, first levelling the score with a powerful header from a perfectly delivered Corey Hillman corner. Senivota then demonstrated his composure, slotting home a well-placed shot from just outside the box, assisted by a clever pass from Blair Campbell.

With renewed confidence, Risedale seized control of the match. Corey Hillman, who had already contributed an assist, added to the tally by pouncing on a rebound after a strong save from the Bedale keeper. Alex Stephenson sealed the victory with another well-executed strike from distance, putting the game beyond Bedale's reach. The final whistle blew, confirming Risedale's 5-2 victory and their progression to the next round of the cup.

Thank you to Bedale for hosting #TeamRisedale in a game played with great spirit from both sides.

MP Rishi Sunak Visits Risedale School

Rishi Sunak visited Risedale School in February to hear the new Headteacher set out a new vision for the school.

He met Mrs Greenwood who outlined her vision to improve standards at the secondary school and have the school at the heart of its community.



The Richmond and Northallerton MP heard how Mrs Greenwood, who took over as headteacher just five months ago, has already raised expectations for behaviour and academic standards, which was acknowledged in the school's Ofsted inspection in December.

In the report, whilst suggestions that improvements are necessary, inspectors commented that "there is an air of optimism about the future" and "the school is increasingly ambitious for its pupils."

Mrs Greenwood shared details of the school's improvement plan and its aim to achieve at least 'Good' ratings in all areas at the next Ofsted inspection.

She said: ***"As the new Headteacher, it was reassuring to chat to Mr Sunak about our school improvement plan and the significant progress we have already made this year in the areas of behaviour, culture and quality of education,"***

"This experience gave our young people a platform to grow in confidence, as they not only spoke to a public figure, but learned how their concerns can be represented in Parliament by their MP." Mrs Greenwood concluded.



During the visit, Mr Sunak observed a Year 7 English lesson using virtual reality (VR) technology to explore the Globe Theatre in London as part of a Shakespeare project.

The school has embraced new technologies in teaching, integrating VR to create immersive learning experiences that enhance engagement and deepen understanding.

Mr Sunak also met student-led groups, including Service Pupil Ambassadors, Pupil Librarians, and Pupil Mental Health Ambassadors, who play vital roles in supporting their peers and promoting well-being within the school community.

Mr Sunak said: ***"It is encouraging to see the determination of Risedale School's leadership to drive improvements. The use of innovative teaching methods, such as VR, alongside strong student-led initiatives, shows a real commitment to providing the best possible opportunities for students. I am confident the school will continue to make great strides forward."***

Article and photos kindly provided by Mr Sunak's Press Office.

House System News

Turing House ❤️ proved they were a force to be reckoned with in the recent staff dodgeball tournament, dodging, ducking, and diving their way to victory! Pankhurst 💜 put up a good fight, securing second place, while Seacole 🧡 and Attenborough 💙 battled it out for third and fourth respectively (Attenborough, unfortunately, suffered three strikes). Congratulations to all the staff participants for their spirited play. The pupil competition is now underway, promising more exciting dodgeball action!

Our Epraise shop is now fully restocked with a fantastic array of rewards! In addition, we've planned a calendar of engaging reward trips and events designed to celebrate and encourage positive behaviour and achievement. The race to earn Epraise points is on, and it's inspiring to see the dedication and enthusiasm of our pupils.

Keep up the excellent work, everyone!

The current House Point totals are as follows:

- 1st Pankhurst 💜 with 26,646 points
- 2nd Seacole 🧡 with 26,556 points
- 3rd Turing ❤️ with 25,698 points
- 4th Attenborough 💙 with 23,808 points



To view the most up-to-date house point totals and see how each house is progressing throughout the term, please visit our dedicated [House System](#) website page.

#TeamRisedale 💙💜🧡❤️

Celebrating Attendance 🏆

Last half term, we had some great attendance figures from our tutor groups. Each week, we celebrated the group with the highest combined attendance, recognising their dedication and commitment to their studies. These consistent efforts not only contribute to individual academic success but also foster a positive and productive learning environment for the entire school community.

A special mention must go to the pupils of 7 Westwood, who not only won the cup an impressive four times but also achieved a perfect 100% attendance on one of those weeks. Their exceptional dedication sets a fantastic example for the entire school community.

Well done to all the tutor groups and especially to those who claimed the weekly prize!

Congratulations to our winners:

10/01/2025	7 Westwood	100%
17/01/2025	9 Allen	98.70%
24/01/2025	11 Houlgate	97.73%
31/01/2025	7 Westwood	97.83%
07/02/2025	7 Westwood	97.39%
14/02/2025	7 Westwood	98.18%





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A family of learners