

END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER



End of Year Message from Vicky

As another academic year draws to a close, I want to thank everyone who has helped us continue to grow and strengthen the New Leaf community. It has been another incredible year, and I couldn't be prouder of everything our learners, families, staff and partner organisations have achieved together.

At New Leaf, we believe that success looks different for every young person. For some, it is taking the first steps back into education; for others, it is building confidence, developing friendships, attending more regularly, completing work experience or preparing for future qualifications. Whatever the achievement, every step forward is worth celebrating. Watching our learners grow in confidence, courage and independence has been the greatest achievement of all. Seeing young people who struggled to attend school walk through our doors with a smile, build trusting relationships and begin to believe in themselves again reminds us why New Leaf exists.

This year we were delighted to welcome several new colleagues to the New Leaf team. Ben Durkan joined us as Centre Manager and has played an instrumental role in leading the centre, strengthening our curriculum and helping shape the next stage of New Leaf's development. Alongside Torrie and Martin, who have brought specialist expertise across English, Science, Music and Digital Technologies, Ben has helped create an engaging curriculum that reflects the needs and strengths of our learners.

We also welcomed Jean, whose caring approach has encouraged learners to explore new foods and develop healthy habits through growing and preparing food together. Andrea, our Senior Learning Mentor, has quickly become an invaluable member of the team through her compassion and dedication to our learners, and we were delighted to see her recognised through her nomination for Cumbria Woman of the Year.

I would also like to thank every member of the New Leaf team. Whether supporting with learning, building relationships, providing therapeutic support, caring for our animals, preparing meals, creating meaningful opportunities or working behind the scenes, every member of staff has played an important role in making this year such a success.

Like any growing organisation, this year has brought change, but it has also brought new ideas, fresh perspectives and an even stronger team, all united by a shared commitment to achieving the very best outcomes for our learners. I feel incredibly fortunate to work alongside such a passionate and committed group of people, and I am so proud of the team we have today.

We've continued to strengthen our partnerships with families, schools and professionals, ensuring every learner receives the support they need to flourish. A special thank you to Chris Edwards for his Occupational Therapy support and to Ian and Gill Ridley, whose generous sponsorship brought our much-loved pygmy goats to New Leaf.

Looking ahead, we're excited to continue developing our curriculum and expanding the opportunities available to our learners through a wider range of nationally recognised vocational qualifications.

Whether you're joining us at one of our Wednesday HAF clubs over the summer or returning in September, thank you for being part of the New Leaf community. We wish you a wonderful summer break and look forward to another year of learning, growth and success together. Together, we continue to build a community where every young person feels safe, understood and empowered to thrive.

Celebrating a fantastic year



We were delighted to round off another successful academic year with our Summer Fete and Learner Awards. It was a wonderful afternoon spent celebrating the achievements, progress and unique strengths of our learners alongside their families, friends and the wider New Leaf community.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the day so special.

We can't believe the difference and how far she has come in just half a term at New Leaf. The improvement has been incredible.

LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS

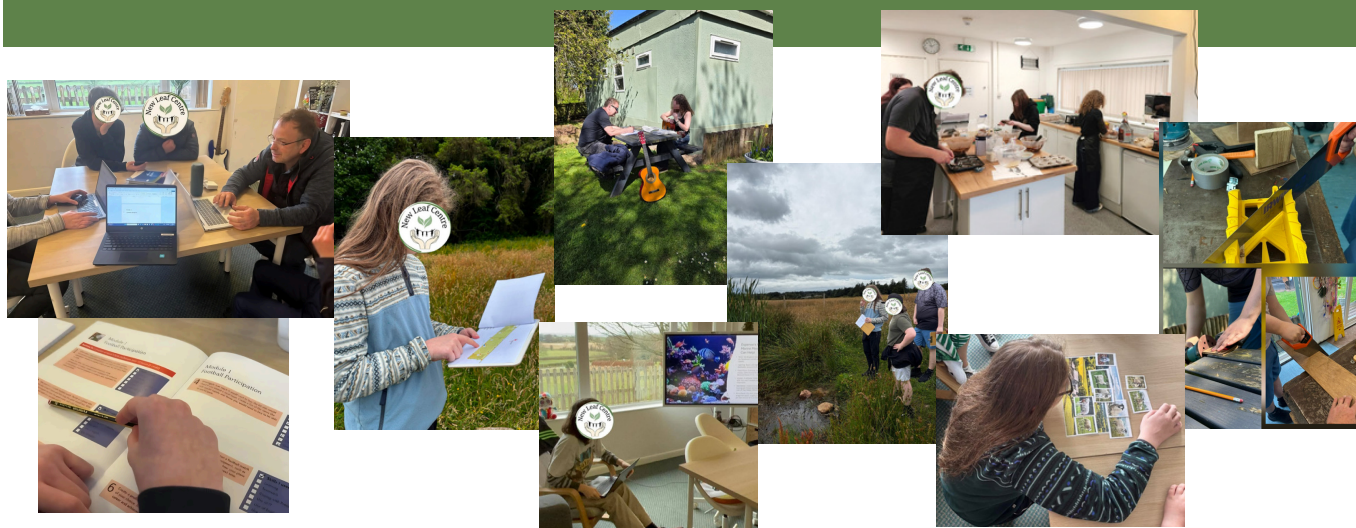
EVERY LEARNER. EVERY JOURNEY. EVERY SUCCESS.

At New Leaf, we know that learning isn't one-size-fits-all. Every learner arrives with their own strengths, interests, challenges and aspirations, so our curriculum is designed to be flexible, engaging and meaningful.

We believe every young person deserves an education that builds confidence, nurtures curiosity and prepares them for life beyond the classroom.

This year, we have continued to strengthen and enhance our curriculum, combining Functional Skills, ASDAN programmes, therapeutic support and practical learning experiences to create engaging opportunities for every learner. Whether working towards qualifications, completing work experience, developing practical life skills or discovering a new passion, we are incredibly proud of the progress our learners make every day.

Looking ahead to the new academic year, we are excited to further expand our curriculum through the introduction of a wider range of nationally recognised vocational qualifications. These new opportunities will provide learners with even more pathways to discover their strengths, develop new skills and prepare confidently for their next steps in education, employment and adulthood.



CELEBRATING PROGRESS

At New Leaf, we celebrate every achievement, no matter how big or small. This year, our learners have continued to make fantastic progress, working towards Functional Skills qualifications, completing and progressing through ASDAN courses, undertaking work experience, developing practical life skills and growing in confidence through learning within the local community. Every milestone reflects the courage, determination and perseverance our learners show each day, and we couldn't be prouder of everything they have achieved.

This year our learners have:

Successfully completed work experience placements.

Worked towards Functional Skills qualifications in English and Mathematics.

Completed and progressed through ASDAN programmes, including Animal Care, Football, FoodWise, Construction and Computing.

Developed confidence, independence and life skills through practical and community-based learning.

Taken part in educational visits that have strengthened confidence, communication and independence.

"Education isn't about fitting every learner into the same mould—it's about helping every young person discover how they learn best and giving them the confidence to succeed."
– Ben Durkan, Centre Manager

"The most rewarding part of teaching is watching learners discover strengths they never realised they had."
– Torrie, Deputy Centre Manager

END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

Attendance: Building Confidence, Creating Futures

Every day is a step forward.

Attendance is about so much more than being present. For many of our learners, walking through the door each morning represents courage, trust and a willingness to take another step on their educational journey. Every day a learner chooses to attend is a sign that they feel safe, valued and ready to engage.

Building Confidence, Creating Opportunities

Strong attendance creates opportunities. This year, we have celebrated learners successfully transitioning back into mainstream education, while others have begun carefully planned transition programmes as they prepare for their next steps.

We're equally proud of the learners who have remained in their mainstream schools through our dual-placement model. By working collaboratively with schools, families and other professionals, we have been able to provide the additional support needed to help maintain placements that may otherwise have broken down. This joined-up approach enables learners to access the right support at the right time, helping them remain connected to their education while building confidence and resilience.

A Year of Positive Progress

Our attendance figures reflect the trust our learners place in New Leaf and the relationships they have built with our team.

- Nearly 60% of our learners achieved attendance above the national average for Alternative Provision.
- Almost 40% achieved attendance of 85% or above—an exceptional achievement within Alternative Provision.

For us, attendance is never just a number. It represents confidence, connection and the belief that New Leaf is a place where every learner feels safe enough to learn, grow and thrive.



The Difference We're Making

 **Nearly 60% of learners achieved attendance above the national average for Alternative Provision**

 **Almost 40% achieved attendance of 85% or above**

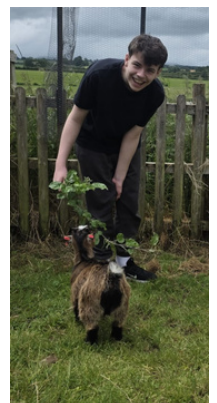
 **Learners successfully transitioned back into mainstream education**

 **Learners supported through dual placements to maintain mainstream education**

 **Work experience opportunities completed**

 **3 pygmy goats**

 **New gardening and healthy eating initiatives**





END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

QUALITY ASSURED

Committed to continuous improvement

We are committed to continually reflecting on and improving the education and support we provide.

In January, we welcomed representatives from both the Westmorland & Furness and Cumberland SEND teams for a Quality Assurance visit. During the visit, they explored teaching and learning, pastoral support, safeguarding, leadership and management. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, recognising the strong foundations we had established and our ambitions for the future.

We were delighted to invite them back in April to showcase the progress we had made. Their feedback reflected the significant developments across the centre, including:

"The centre has focus and momentum."

"New Leaf has a buzz and an energy."

"The new curriculum has bespoke outcomes linked to EHCPs and learner needs."

"New Leaf ensures academic rigour alongside pastoral support."

"The centre is well organised, calm and attractive."

"New Leaf sets high standards."

We are incredibly proud of this feedback, which reflects the hard work and dedication of our staff and the commitment we share to providing the very best outcomes for every learner.



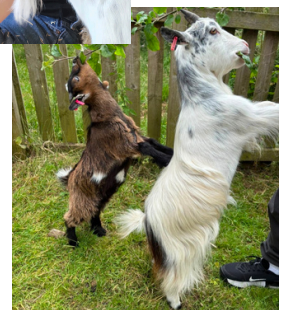
Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Growing Our Animal Family

Learning through care, connection and compassion.

This year, our animal family continued to grow with the arrival of Daphne, Coco and Nutella, our three pygmy goats, alongside two new guinea pigs and a tropical fish tank. We'd like to extend a special thank you to Ian and Gill Ridley, whose generous sponsorship made the arrival of our goats possible.

Our animals play an important role in everyday life at New Leaf. They provide therapeutic opportunities, encourage responsibility and nurture empathy, while helping learners build confidence, develop routines and experience the calming benefits of spending time with animals. Whether feeding the goats, caring for our smaller animals or simply taking a quiet moment by the fish tank, these interactions have become a much-loved part of life at New Leaf.



END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

BUILDING CONFIDENCE THROUGH REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES

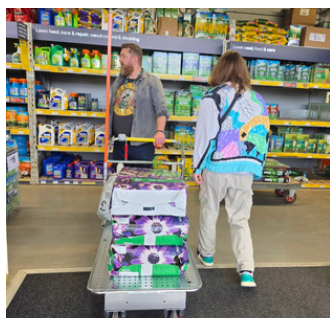
Some of the most valuable learning at New Leaf happens beyond the classroom. Every trip, activity and shared experience helps our learners develop confidence, independence and the practical skills they need for everyday life. For many of our young people, simply leaving the centre to visit a local shop, take part in an off-site activity or try something new is a huge achievement, and one that deserves to be celebrated.

Throughout the year, our learners have embraced a wide range of opportunities that have encouraged them to step outside their comfort zones, build new relationships and discover interests they may never have explored before.



Life Skills in Action

Learning real-life skills is an important part of our curriculum. Learners have planned meals, shopped to a budget, ordered and paid for items independently and prepared lunches for one another, developing confidence, communication and independence along the way.



Learning Through Experience

This year, learners have enjoyed a variety of enriching experiences, including working alongside Cumbria Wildlife Trust at Cold Springs Nature Reserve, taking part in a sheep farming workshop with South Lakes Farm, attending a group goat keeping course and enjoying regular football sessions on the on-site pitches. They have also helped create our willow den, developed our gardens and taken part in a range of seasonal activities, including celebrating World Book Day.



Preparing for the Future

Learners have continued to build confidence and develop skills for adulthood through work experience placements, including opportunities within a local primary school and an animal rescue centre. We also welcomed the Right2Work team, who provided an informative session exploring future education, employment and training opportunities.



Supporting Wellbeing

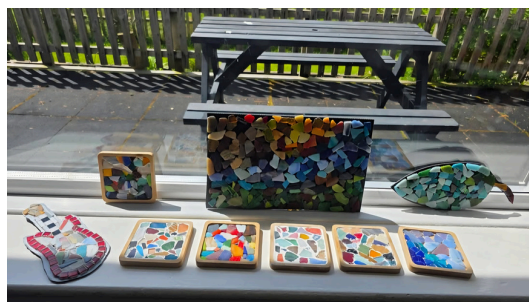
Alongside academic learning, learners have benefited from weekly group Occupational Therapy sessions, music and media activities, and opportunities to explore instruments such as the guitar, keyboard and flute. These experiences support communication, emotional wellbeing, creativity and self-expression, helping every learner to grow in confidence.



Alternative Provision
Nurturing Growth.
Inspiring Potential

END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

CREATIVE LEARNING



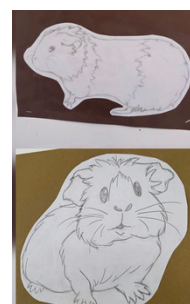
Where creativity, confidence and wellbeing come together.

Creative learning gives our learners the opportunity to express themselves, develop confidence and discover new strengths.

One of our Learning Mentors recently shared a story that perfectly captures the impact of creativity. When one learner begins to feel overwhelmed or frustrated with their artwork, they choose to take a walk through our gardens before returning to their project. That short time outdoors helps them reset, and with a fresh perspective their creativity begins to flow again.

This year, that learner has created an incredible collection of artwork, including detailed horses, weeping willows, greenhouses and beautiful garden scenes. Their work is a wonderful reminder that creativity isn't just about the finished piece—it's about perseverance, self-expression and believing in your own abilities.

Alongside painting and drawing, learners have explored woodworking, sewing, mosaic art, wall-mounted jigsaws and many other creative projects, each celebrating imagination, individuality and personal achievement.





Alternative Provision
Nurturing Growth,
Inspiring Potential

END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

Celebrating Success

This year has brought some special moments for New Leaf. We were delighted to be shortlisted in the Diverse Cumbria Awards, celebrating inclusion across the county, and later named finalists in the Golden Apple Awards for our commitment to inclusive education.

We were also incredibly proud to see Andrea nominated for Cumbria Woman of the Year, recognising her outstanding contribution to the wider community. We feel very fortunate to have such a caring and dedicated member of our team.

While these moments have been lovely to celebrate, the greatest reward continues to be seeing our learners grow in confidence, overcome challenges and achieve success in their own unique way.



Celebrating the End of a Fantastic Year at Beamish Museum

What better way to celebrate another incredible year than with a trip to Beamish Museum.

For many of our learners, visiting a busy, unfamiliar environment would once have felt impossible. Crowds, noise, travelling together and trying something new can be overwhelming. Yet, with the right support, encouragement and understanding, our learners embraced every opportunity the day had to offer.

They explored, laughed, challenged themselves and created memories with friends and staff. Every conversation, every new experience and every step outside a comfort zone was an achievement worth celebrating.

As we looked around Beamish, it wasn't just the smiles that stood out—it was how far our learners had come. Days like these remind us that confidence isn't built overnight. It's built through trust, patience and believing that every young person can succeed in their own way.

We couldn't be prouder of every learner for making this such a memorable end to the school year.



Looking Ahead

We're excited for another year of learning, growth and new opportunities. From expanding our curriculum and introducing new vocational qualifications to creating more memorable experiences, we'll continue to support every learner to build confidence, discover their strengths and achieve success in their own unique way.

Thank you for being part of the New Leaf community. Have a wonderful summer, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in September! 🌿