

# END OF HALF TERM NEWSLETTER



**Alternative Provision**  
Nurturing Growth,  
Inspiring Potential

## Directors Message

As we've reached the end of half term, I want to take a moment to reflect and share with you how far we have come since challenging times before Christmas and how proud I am of our learners and our team. Our young people inspire us every day and we have seen some true talents emerging this half term. In equal measure, the resilience, professionalism, care and consistency demonstrated by our staff ensure that New Leaf can continue to grow with purpose as well as setting an environment where learners can thrive on their own unique pathway.

Our focus over the next two terms is centred on strengthening and refining our offer. This includes embedding a new curriculum model as some of the learners are ready and able to take on more; enhancing therapeutic and pastoral provision, and ensuring that every learner has a clearly defined, personalised pathway aligned to their EHCP outcomes.

We are re-building thoughtfully and intentionally, with quality, stability and long-term sustainability at the forefront of our planning.

We are delighted to have Ben leading the centre, bringing a fantastic blend of SEND experience, educational leadership experience and a clear focus on high standards and meaningful outcomes. He's also proved popular with our learners as he loves to get involved, or is it perhaps the new football goals!

Andrea Brough has been appointed this month as Senior Learning Mentor (Pastoral). Andrea will look after all the PHSE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) areas and help develop life skills and employability opportunities. She has many years' experience in health care settings and in leading, coaching and developing others.

We've also had Martin McDonald with us this new year. His specialist curriculum experience in creative, project-based learning has already had a positive impact on engagement across the centre. The team have been spinning the decks, creating music and videos and we hope Martin will be staying with us going forward.

Finally in team changes, we also look forward to welcoming Torrie Sullivan at the beginning of March who will take on the role of Senior Learning Specialist. Torrie is another qualified teacher who brings a wonderful blend of senior leadership and curriculum development knowledge with animal assisted learning experience from her most recent role at Susan's Farm.

We remain ambitious for our learners and continue to grow with purpose. We had a successful Quality Assurance visit in January and they joined us in celebrating the direction we are moving in at the centre. As we develop, we are working closely alongside local initiatives, ensuring we keep pace with change while helping to lead and raise the standards of Alternative Provision across Cumbria – always with the learners at the heart of that work.

Thanks to our families and our commissioning partners for your continued trust and collaboration.

## Centre Manager Message

I've had a fantastic first half term at New Leaf. It has been a real privilege getting to know our learners, exploring their interests, and supporting them as they work towards their EHCP outcomes.

I've also really valued the conversations I've had with many parents and carers. If we haven't yet had the chance to meet, just give me a call or drop in for a cuppa and a chat. Working in partnership with families is central to what we do, and I will always make time to discuss how we can help your young person thrive—both here at the centre and at home with you. Support doesn't stop at the centre doors.

Building on a brilliant start to the year, next half term will see us launch our new curriculum. Our Learning Support Mentors have worked incredibly hard to develop therapeutic, personal development, ASDAN, English, and maths pathways that learners can access at the right time and pace for them. Alongside this, we will work with each young person to create a personalised learning pathway, giving them a clear sense of purpose each day and helping them understand how every session contributes to their growth into healthy, happy, and capable young adults.

We know that some of our learners may want to engage but not feel ready or able. Their social emotional well-being, mindset and mental health will always come first. Strengthening our pastoral support means we can make sure pathways go at the right speed for each learner.

There is so much to look forward to, and we are genuinely excited for the journey ahead.

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## ASDAN & FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

As we reach the end of this half term, it has been wonderful to see the continued progress across our curriculum.

Learners already enrolled on ASDAN programmes have been steadily working towards completion and growing independence in their learning. We have also welcomed five new learners onto ASDAN short courses; it has been a pleasure to see their enthusiasm and engagement as they explore subjects aligned to their individual interests and strengths.

Alongside our short courses, next half term will see the introduction of the ASDAN Personal Development Programme, which will further strengthen and complement our evolving curriculum offer.

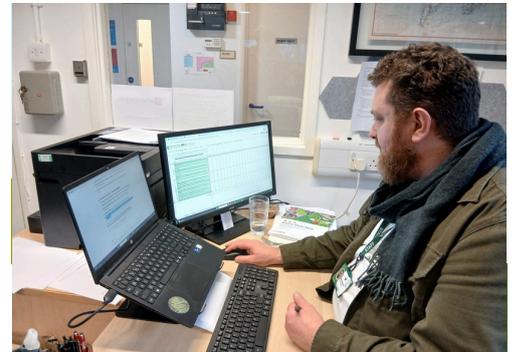
We also now have a number of learners enrolled on Functional Skills qualifications in English and Mathematics. We look forward to continuing to support them in developing the knowledge, skills and confidence required to progress towards formal assessment.



ASDAN THEORY WORK



ASDAN THEORY WORK



## CREATIVE SPARKS – MEDIA & MUSIC PRODUCTION

This half term Media and Music Production sessions have been buzzing with creativity. Learners have been developing recording and editing skills, and we were treated to a visit from Martin and the mobile media studio, bringing extra insight and inspiration to the work he's been leading with them.

Find out more about the fantastic work from Mobius-Loop [→ LEARN MORE](#)





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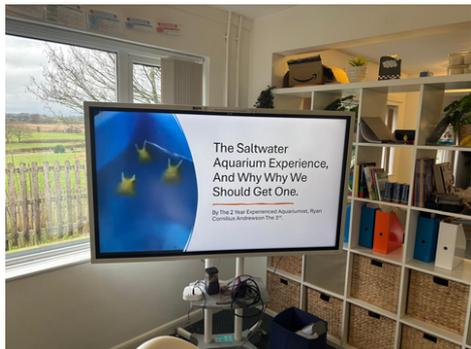
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## MARINE MAGIC

One of our learners has spent the last few weeks creating a detailed 19-page presentation on why New Leaf should have a fish tank. He confidently presented it to the management team and we were blown away by his research, passion and confidence.

After such a convincing case from our very own "Marine Messiah", it was hard to say no!

The tank is in situ and will be settling over the half term break after which we will be welcoming some aquatic additions. Make sure you follow our facebook page to catch up on marine tales from New Leaf.



## WEEKLY LUNCH MENU AND BREAKFAST SNACK TROLLEY



This half term we introduced our weekly menu and a 'help yourself' breakfast trolley to encourage independence, healthy eating, and trying new foods. Drinks, snacks, and breakfast are all served from the trolley, so learners can help themselves without needing to go to the kitchen. Weekly lunch menus are displayed across the centre with visual images of each day's meals, helping learners anticipate what's available and supporting confidence in trying new foods and widening their diets.



Our young people were even involved in putting the trolley together and taking it for a trial spin, practicing their "air hostess" skills - a fun way to build ownership and confidence. A big well done to Andrea and the team for making meal times engaging, empowering and full of smiles!



## SEMH GROUP WORKSHOP LAUNCH

This half term saw the introduction of weekly SEMH group workshops led by Christopher Edwards, Specialist Occupational Therapist. The sessions are designed to support neurodivergent young people through a structured focus on emotional regulation, self-awareness and practical well-being strategies, in line with our SEMH curriculum.

We are very proud of the young people who have felt confident enough to take part. Engaging in group provision is a significant step, and their participation reflects the supportive environment we continue to build at New Leaf.



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## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

We've been focussing on strengthening our partnerships this half term. We were pleased to welcome PC Damien Fox, who delivered training to the team on the POL-Ed system - the team are now fully enrolled and we are embedding the system into our provision. We look forward to welcoming PC Fox back after the half term break to carry out some work directly with our learners. Sessions will be tailored to our learners needs helping to keep them informed, safe and confident.

Staff also visit the UCC Resourced Provision Unit and it was encouraging to see a clear, supportive transition pathway available for learners when they are ready and at a pace that suits them. Building strong relationships like this ensures that future steps are carefully planned and positive.

In addition, we welcomed Chris from Inspira to begin conversations around careers guidance, and next half term we look forward to meeting Right2Work to explore supported apprenticeship opportunities for those who are ready. Together, these partnerships help us provide meaningful, forward-thinking pathways for our young people as they plan for life beyond New Leaf.



right2work  
work & learn



INSPIRA  
inspiring you



Westmorland  
& Furness  
Council

## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

At New Leaf, we recognise that emotional wellbeing is just as important as academic progress. If you or your child ever need support, there are several trusted services available:

### General mental health support for young people:

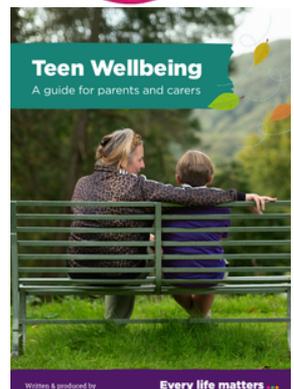
- Shout – Free, confidential, 24/7 text support. Text SHOUT to 85258 to speak with a trained volunteer. (<https://giveusashout.org>)
- Kooth – Online counselling and wellbeing support for young people. (<https://www.kooth.com>)
- The Mix – Support for under 25s on mental health, relationships and life challenges. Call 0808 808 4994 or use online services. (<https://www.themix.org.uk>)
- Childline – Free, confidential support for under 19s. Call 0800 1111. (<https://www.childline.org.uk>)
- Papyrus HOPELINE247 – Support for young people at risk of suicide. Call 0800 068 4141 or text 07786 209697. (<https://papyrus-uk.org>)
- Samaritans – Available 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk. Call 116 123. (<https://www.samaritans.org>)
- Mind – Mental health advice and information. Call 0300 123 3393. (<https://www.mind.org.uk>)

### Eating disorder support:

- Beat – UK's leading eating disorder charity, including support for ARFID (Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder). Call 0808 801 0677 or visit their website. (<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>)

This half term, all staff completed a full-day training session with Every Life Matters, specifically designed to support neurodivergent young people. All staff now hold the Orange Button, recognising their training in suicide awareness and prevention. Families are encouraged to explore the Every Life Matters resource library, including guides such as the Teen and Wellbeing Guide, for practical advice and support. (<https://www.every-life-matters.org.uk/resources>)

If you are unsure where to turn, please talk to us – we are here to help you access the right support.



Written & produced by

Every life matters