
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

The Federation of Longhorsley St Helen's and Whalton Church of England Aided Schools

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Tuesday 23rd April 2019

Dear Parents

Welcome back to the summer term and to the sunshine; what a wonderful Easter it has been; I hope that you have all had an enjoyable break.

A quick round up of last half term and things to come this term.

Fundraising and Looking after the Environment

The Grand opening of the extension was a wonderful success - thanks to everyone for coming along and for all the help that we had from the PTA committee; it was certainly a great honour to have Bishop Christine with us to bless our new part of school and to be able to thank and recognise all of the fundraisers. Anyone who still has not managed to see our new classroom is more than welcome to pop in at the end of a school day.

Huge thanks to Miss Thompson and Mrs Mayer for organising the Fairtrade coffee morning in EYFS at the end of last half term; it raised over £130; the coffee bean hunt was a real hit not just with the children but with so many parents!

The 'Fun Run' organised by Mrs Campbell and the RE Ambassadors, with huge support from Milly, Archie and Jayne, resulted in over £650 being raised for our school charities - The Great North Air Ambulance and The Dogs Trust. Thank you to everyone who supported these events and the parents who gave up their time to help.

The Eco-committee have also been very active and planted trees to ensure sustainability in our Community Woodland with one of our governors Tim Fish and Penny Ford from the Parish Council, accompanied by Mrs Lishman and other volunteers. The committee also managed to go on a litter pick around the village, inspired by one of our Year 4 Mum's - great thanks to all involved and to Mr Reilly for keeping our Twitter feed updated! The eco theme continued during our Key Stage 2 Cambo Church Trail where the children were thinking about all of our world creations and how to make the best of what we have and look after and care for our environment. Thank you to Ben for accompanying the children and to Reverend Frances for all of the hard work put into making it such a successful and enjoyable visit.



Feedback from Parents

Following conversations with some parents, we have reviewed our Federation e-Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policies. These will be put onto our school website once approved by governors with the new Acceptable Use Policy coming out to all parents.

Many thanks to those of you who took the time to respond to our request for our school motto in terms of defining 'Aspire, Believe, Achieve'. From the responses received, and the children's own explanations on the video clip shown at the grand opening, we have decided to leave them open ended to reflect the fact that we aim to 'encourage every child to pursue their limitless aspirations with a strong belief in themselves to achieve, to celebrate their uniqueness and support their distinctive journeys throughout our school'.

Attendance and Admission Policies

Following my last newsletter about Attendance concerns, we will be reviewing our current Attendance Policy for the Federation next half term. If any parent would like to be involved in this, please could you give your name to Mrs McEwan in the first instance. Vision for Education will be running attendance certificate and prize awards for us for the next two half-terms for those children with 100% attendance.

For your information, the Admissions Policy 2020-2021 is now available on our school website following full consultation.

Teaching and Learning

Last half term the Pupil Progress Update Meetings took place which looked at the progress your child/children made from the Autumn term. Please support your children in working on their next steps identified by their class teachers for the rest of this academic year. As always, please do not hesitate to pop in if you have any concerns or queries.

Our School Improvement Partner visited again - this time to look at current standards and she was very happy with the children's progress and the way the school tracks, monitors and evaluates progress in line with our challenging targets set. One of the Assistant Directors of the Diocese also carried out a whole school review which was also very positive; she was especially impressed by our children's attitude to learning and their behaviour.

This half term we have the Year 2 SATs taking place - we hope that the parents who came along to the information session found it useful. The Y1 phonics check information session for parents will take place on Monday 13th May at 2.45pm.

We will also be focusing on handwriting across the school which will form the basis of the Headteacher's Star of the Week award. Across the Federation we believe that handwriting is an important part of children's development and agree with the research that good handwriting allows children to have greater confidence and greater motivation to write in all areas of the curriculum as well as supporting the development of cognitive skills. We have just reviewed our handwriting policy based very much on the research and information found at (<http://www.writeyourfuture.com>).

Staffing Update

We welcome Mrs Casper from Whalton every Thursday and Friday in EYFS to work alongside Miss Thompson. Mrs Mayer will continue to work in EYFS at the beginning of the week. Huge thanks to Mrs Sutcliffe for helping us out in the interim.

Mother Day Gifts and Easter Coffee Morning

Finally, a great big thank you to the PTA and helpers for organising, 'filling' and helping the children to decorate their own thoughtful plant pot for Mothering Sunday; I am sure that everyone really appreciated receiving one as well as the children decorating their own egg cup. The Easter Coffee Morning following our Church Service, was also a lovely morning. Thank you for all your donations and to the PTA and parents who helped - including Mrs Lamb!

A reminder that all of our diary dates are available on our school website: <http://www.longhorsley-st-helens.northumberland.sch.uk/website> .

Looking forward to a fun filled summer with lots of learning.

Kind regards

Mrs Brannen
Executive Headteacher