
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

The Federation of Longhorsley and Whalton Church of England Aided Schools

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Dear Parents

Welcome back to Summer 2 and the sunshine! It is wonderful to be back working across both schools; thank you so much for such a warm welcome back from those of you I have seen so far; the children have been utterly delightful too.

The staff have continued to work extremely hard in my absence and I am so very proud of them all. Mrs Elliott and Mrs Campbell have been simply brilliant continuing in their roles and Mrs Stroughair has been of great support to them and The Federation. Thank you to them and to the Governors for all of their support too, particularly our Chair, Mr Truscott, who was instrumental in liaising with The Diocese and Northumberland County Council.

It has also been wonderful to see how much progress the children have continued to make over the last half term and I have thoroughly enjoyed reading your comments about your children's reports; so thank you for taking the time to do this.

Just a quick update for the rest of this term:

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check

All children in Year 4 will be taking the national Multiplication Tables Check before the end of the month, although the results are purely for us and not published this year. We are working hard in school on ensuring that they get as much timed practice as possible and it would be great if you could continue to support this practice at home. For those of you with older children, you will fully appreciate how much of a life skill knowing all of the times table is, especially in readiness for going to Middle School/ for the upper Key Stage 2 curriculum. If you need any further information, please talk to your child's class teacher.

A useful website for your child to practise their knowledge and speed can be accessed using the following link: [Year 4 Multiplication Check Practice](#)



Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATS

In line with the Department for Education guidance, we are not carrying out the national testing for our Year 2 or Year 6 children this year due to the pandemic. These have been replaced with teacher assessment. Monitoring of teaching and learning and book scrutiny last half term was extremely positive demonstrating how well the children have adapted from home to school learning and the progress made as well as their excellent behaviour. If you have any concerns with regard to your child's progress at all, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Class Teacher in the first instance.

Covid

Thankyou so much for continuing to follow government guidance and our own school risk assessments to minimise transference of the virus. From the radio and news, you will be aware of the cases in North Tyneside, which have meant that bubbles have closed in some schools there. Closer to home, there have been a number of positive cases identified through lateral flow testing of older children across the Partnerships; many with no symptoms, so please continue to support us to keep staff and children safe. We will continue to update you of any changes and staff will continue to do their twice weekly testing.

Teacher Training Day

Just another gentle reminder that, due to Covid implications last year we changed one of our designated Teacher Training Days. We will therefore be open as normal on Friday 25 June for all children at both schools.

Staffing

It is with a heavy heart that I let you know that Mrs McEwan, our Office Manager at Longhorsley, has finally decided to take her very well earned retirement at the end of this term. She is going to be a huge miss as she completely embraces what our Federation is all about - hardworking, fully committed to doing her very best for the children, staff, parents and governors and always going the extra mile for others; wearing so many other 'hats' at the same time. She has given us a total of 28 years as a TA, HLTA, regularly caretaking and cleaning - as well as her official post as Office Manager. Mrs McEwan, you are an absolute superstar; we shall miss you!

Before half term, we successfully appointed a new Assistant Headteacher for Whalton. Mr David Morris is joining us from Steadlane Primary School from September and hopefully will be able to join us for a couple of days before the end of term. We look forward to welcoming him to our Federation team.

Staffing Organisation and Classes for September

These will be sent out later in the term. As always, due to our pupil numbers varying in each year group, this is reviewed every year, which determines our class organisation. There will, however, be no 'New to Year Group' meetings for parents. Any new class information will be sent out instead, with the opportunity to meet teachers in the Autumn term, hopefully face to face.

New to Reception

For our new to Reception parents, there will be further information sent out separately to ensure that you and your child have everything you need to begin your journey with us if you have a child at PAWS, or to continue the journey if your child is a Longhorsley Nursery child.

Y4 and Y6 Leavers

Plans are underway to ensure that the children have lots of memories to take with them into their new schools of their last few weeks at our Federation. Some information has already been sent out. There is more to follow about the end of year Leavers' Service. As you can understand, this will not take the form of previous years as a whole school event but we will follow guidance and offer what we can safely for the Leavers. After such a strange year in particular, it will be really sad to see our oldest children leave but know that they will continue to be the very best that they can be; I am sure that you and them will have many happy memories of their time with us as we do of them. The very best of luck to all of our leavers when the time comes.

Uniform

Uniform lists are on the school websites along with our providers.

Please make sure that you order in plenty of time. Backpacks need to be as small as possible please and there are suggested school ones available to buy. Please no huge backpacks as we just do not have the space and do not want to disappoint any children. Many thanks for your support in this. For our new starters, we provide their very first book bag. If you are experiencing any financial difficulties, especially in respect to buying uniform, please contact either school as we may be able to help and we always have spares of jumpers etc.

Sports Days

These will take place in the school day, organised in bubbles, with our Sports Lead, Andy Brown from Active Northumberland. and just for our children. Longhorsley's will take place on 17th June and Whalton's on 24th June, so please make sure that the children wear their sports kit ready to come to school for this event.

Trim Trail at Longhorsley

You may recall in my March Newsletter, we were planning a new outdoor Trim Trail at Longhorsley for the children. Huge thanks to Mrs Campbell for taking the lead on this. The children were all involved in selecting the equipment and plans have been drawn up and approved. Unfortunately, the installation has been put back by the company and it will be installed now during the summer holidays. Something to look forward to in September!

New Toilet Block at Whalton

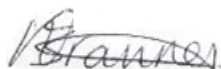
This is also underway and the first site visit with the Builders is next Friday so Class 1 will have something to look forward to.

Covid Catch-up Funding

Like all schools, we have been awarded government funding to help close the gap in learning caused by the pandemic. Please see our school websites to see how this funding has been allocated and spent. It is not a huge amount - approximately £80 per child. Every school is unique and our funding is very much determined by pupil number and our socio economic context. To put it bluntly, the more deprived the area, the more funding becomes available. We have only a small percentage of free school meals and pupil premium children, which is why we rely heavily on our PTA funding for additional resources. Please be reassured that every penny we get is spent on ensuring that the children receive the best education possible through resourcing classrooms, equipment, staffing and staff training etc. This is carefully monitored by the Governors. We are two small rural schools, however, we always think big and being a Federation gives us greater areas for saving and sharing. However, if your family is entitled to free school meals, and your circumstances have changed, please do come and ask how you can apply as this does benefit school with additional funding.

Here's to an enjoyable half term!

Kindest regards



Mrs Brannen
Executive Headteacher