
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

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

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Friday 11th January 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

A very "Happy New Year" to you all! I hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas break with your families and a great start to the new year. I have heard so much about last half term and especially the success of the Christmas performances at both schools (which I was so sad to have missed) that I would just like to personally thank all the staff for all of their hard work to enable this to happen from buying huge bed sheets from Dunelm for the backdrop to coming in to rehearse with the children on their days off, not to mention the music organisation, the sorting of costumes and practices ... as well as tidying away everything afterwards!! Truly well done Team Longhorsley and Team Whalton. Christmas lunches were also great successes too at each school - so huge thanks to Fiona and Joyce - not an easy task on such a large scale for all of our children and special visitors. I would also like to thank both PTAs for all of their hard work last term, especially over the Christmas period; we are so very lucky to have them supporting us in our fundraising.

New Year's Lunch

This term we have lots planned - starting with our very popular New Year's Family Lunch on Monday 14th January at Whalton and Friday 18th January at Longhorsley (for parents of Year 1, 2 and 3 children - Reception and Year 4 parents thoroughly enjoyed the Harvest lunch, so there is much to look forward to!). Please ensure all slips are returned to the offices in plenty of time so we can plan accordingly to avoid disappointment for both yourselves and the children.

Year 4 Classroom Extension at Longhorsley

It is commendable how well the Year 4 children and Mr Reilly have adjusted to their temporary classroom. When I have popped through, the atmosphere has been so calm with lots of learning taking place, however, the wait will not be for much longer! Following a meeting with the builders next week, a further update will be given but it is starting to look really promising to meet the deadline. Please remember that we are closing the office on Wednesday afternoons to support Mrs McEwan in preparing for the move to her new office too.



Teaching and Learning

Newsletters outlining the term's new topics and curriculum for each class are being sent home this week. Class Learning Journeys will also be available on our school website under Curriculum. Thank you to the staff for all of their hard work in producing these - a lot of fun topic based learning has been planned and visits to deepen learning even further through first-hand experience. In addition, Years 5 and 6 at Whalton will be working with, and hosting, other local primary schools at the Village Hall later this month to get an age appropriate understanding of the Holocaust. Huge thanks to Mrs Elliott for organising the event, including the guest speaker and workshops- a great deal of learning and understanding will take place on that day.

Although our next formal Pupil Progress Update Meetings for parents will be held next half term, please remember that you can make appointments to see your child's teacher at any point in the year to discuss your child's progress or if you have any questions. Following our end of term assessments, we will be inviting individual parents in earlier to discuss ways forward to support their child's progress, this is a supportive meeting as part of our commitment to early intervention and is nothing to worry about. Class teachers will send out an invitation.

Behaviour Policy

Many of our policies are updated annually and last term we finalised our Policy for Good Behaviour with staff and governors. It is available on both school websites under Policies, however, if anyone would like a hard copy, please do not hesitate to see either Mrs McEwan or Miss Johnston. We continue to have our Federation Expectations, which are dovetailed with our core values as church schools - please see below:



OUR FEDERATION EXPECTATIONS



1. We look after our school and each other
2. We are kind, polite and helpful to everybody
3. We keep our hands, feet and other objects to ourselves
4. We always do as we are asked and always allow others to get on with their work
5. We walk sensibly and quietly in school

Hope - seeing the good in everyone/thing

Honesty - always being truthful

Forgiveness - letting go of mistakes

Friendship - being a friend to all

Trust - in yourself and others

Love - of each other and God



Your child may have talked to you about our traffic light system or being on the cloud/gold. High expectations and the promotion of everyone's ability to make good choices, allow the children to learn from any mistakes with a real emphasis on honesty, reflection, forgiveness and celebration of all things positive. Hopefully the children at Longhorsley are proud of, and enjoying, their new trophies for the weekly Headteacher's Star Award (chosen by the School Council) and the new Core Value Cup with all of our values engraved on them - coming soon to the children at Whalton!

We have also reflected on our school motto and whilst retaining ...'to be the best that we can be', with the addition of 'very best', we are adding three carefully chosen words with the acronym ABA which truly reflects our vision for the children:

Aspire - Believe - Achieve...to be the very best that we can be

As we begin the new year, we will be sharing this with the children and asking them to come up with a definition that they understand to accompany the three key words. We would love to hear what your thoughts are for the definitions of the three words too - I have included a little slip for your thoughts and will share them with the children - feel free to hand in or post through our letter box on the gate at Longhorsley or the comment box in the entrance at Whalton - thank you!

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to you all for your continued support as we enter 2019 and a very warm welcome to all our new Nursery children and parents at Longhorsley, and new parents and children at Whalton Primary and PAWS; it is through our successful partnership with you that we can make our children the 'very best that they can be'.

Finally, many thanks for your kind wishes, Christmas cards and gifts; all very much appreciated and thanks to the senior leadership team and governors. I am sure you will agree that Mrs Elliott and Mrs Campbell did an amazing job in my absence (as they always do!), supported by Mr Truscott as Chair and the full governing body. Planned visits were made by a variety of governors to focus on and monitor our school improvement priorities and procedures; our children's wellbeing, the upper Key Stage 2 provision at Whalton, assessment in RE and compliance with the School's Financial Value Standard within the last half term, so great thanks to all the governors for their time given to both schools. We are looking into an appropriate format to feedback and share all of the good practice.

Looking forward to catching up with you all over this half term.

Best wishes

Mrs Brannen
Executive Headteacher

Federation of Longhorsley and Whalton C of E Schools

Suggested definition for the new school motto:

ASPIRE.....

BELIEVE.....

ACHIEVE.....

Please return to school by Friday 18th January. Thank you!