

SCHOOL REORGANISATION IN PONTELAND

Newsletter 3 – June 2017

PROGRESS WITH PLANS FOR THE NEW BUILDINGS FOR PONTELAND HIGH SCHOOL, PONTELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PONTELAND LEISURE CENTRE

The Council has reviewed the original outline planning application for the construction of Ponteland High and Primary schools and Ponteland Leisure Centre and believes there are a small number of concerns raised by residents in Ponteland with their local County Councillors that remain to be addressed. While the investment of £57m into local education and leisure in Ponteland is supported, the Council needs to ensure that it provides the best long-term solution for students and the local community. The four Ponteland County Councillors have asked officers to look at all possible options in detail that will not only provide new schools, but also provide for the long-term interests of the whole community.

In order to facilitate the design changes, Northumberland County Council has to withdraw the outline planning application originally submitted in December 2016. A detailed planning application will now be developed and will be brought forward soon. The submission detailed application will also ensure that educational provision for the students on roll at the schools is secured by enabling the construction of the buildings to take place along the shortest achievable timescale. This will mean any requirement to provide temporary accommodation at the school sites will therefore be kept to a minimum.

UPDATE ON PLANS FOR GOING PRIMARY AND BUILDINGS WORKS FOR THIS SEPTEMBER

STAMFORDHAM FIRST SCHOOL

Update from Claire McKinney, Headteacher

We have enjoyed another busy term with lots of amazing resources arriving for our new class and appointments made to extend and enhance the staff team - preparations for September are well under way! We look forward to the many partnership shared events which includes a fabulous residential to Kingswood in the early autumn term.

We have a new website in production, and an updated logo to reflect the change to Stamfordham Primary School. In terms of keeping parents and carers informed, we have produced an additional series of 'Primary Newsletters' this half term sharing updates on staffing, curriculum, extra-curricular and sports, new build and FAQs.

The new build continues at a pace with work taking place both at the front and back of school - the children have been fascinated by the steel structure that has gone up during the last week. It's now looking more like a building and less like holes in the ground! Busy but very exciting times as we prepare to open our doors as Stamfordham Primary in September!

Building works update

All excavations for the extension at Stamfordham have now been completed and the steelwork is being erected. The works for the new car park are also underway.



Works at Stamfordham

WHALTON FIRST SCHOOL

Update from Nichola Brannen, Headteacher

In the last term of the school year we have been finalising plans for our Primary launch in September. We have decided on our uniform and we are going for a smarter new look! We are staying with our traditional colour red jumper with almost identical logo, as loved by our parents, but now the children will wear a V-neck to compliment a smart shirt and new grey and red tie.

Tighter links have been forged with the other small schools in our area and we are looking forward to more planning sessions with our Year 5 colleagues, together with some shared sporting events for our children. Our Partnership trip to Dukeshouse Wood in September is

fast approaching and this will be a fantastic opportunity for all the Ponteland Year 5s to get to know each other much better.

We have chosen our new planners in Years 4 and 5 which should help the children become more independent in their learning. Parent Meetings have been taking place where parents have had the opportunity to meet their child's new teacher and learn about their new year group's expectations.

Building works update

Our new classroom has a roof! Keepmoat have been taking great care of us and our new build, so much so that it will be sad to see them go when the project comes to an end!



The new extension at Whalton CE First School

HEDDON ON THE WALL FIRST SCHOOL

Update from Andrew Wheatley, Headteacher

Preparations for September are well underway and regular updates are provided in the 'News' Section of the School website. The school has appointed a new Year 5 class teacher and an experienced Key Stage 2 leader with a proven track record of outstanding teaching and achieving very high Key Stage 2 results.

The school logo has been redesigned to reflect our Christian character and our new uniform has also now arrived. The children and staff are already looking forward to getting to know and working with the other Year 5 children and staff during our shared team building residential at Dukeshouse Wood Outdoor Centre in September. We are also looking forward to the other shared events over the coming year. Everyone was also very excited about the arrival of our new school minibus ready for September! This was very kindly funded by the

Ministry of Defence Education Support Fund. We look forward to seeing you out and about in it around the area!

Building works update

The building works are really taking shape with the steel frames, concrete floors and roof in place for the new classrooms, entrance suite and studio hall and the brick walls growing taller each day. The children have relished the opportunities provided by the build to see different trades working on a daily basis who are happy to answer any questions that they may have. The build has also provided a number of unique teaching opportunities especially around our Romans topic where children could compare building techniques and materials and seeing just the foundations in the ground really helped their understanding and interpretation of the remains at Arbeia Roman Fort during their recent visit.

As more and more pieces slot into place for September the school is increasingly excited about the amazing future opportunities for the children in our care.



Keeping an eye on progress at Heddon



The new minibus!

PONTELAND FIRST SCHOOL

Update from Lynn Blain, Headteacher

Work is well underway to convert the old ICT suite and library into 2 year 5 classrooms and a meeting room. The non-fiction library has been relocated on the ground floor where it is more easily accessed by the children. We have bought new portable chrome books which will supplement our computing provision across school.

We have completed a review of our curriculum and have new plans for our full primary curriculum ensuring continuity and progression from early years to Year 6.

New staff have been appointed to teach across school and we have appointed a Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) specialist who will be based here and will teach MFL across the partnership primaries. Our school logo has been modified to reflect the new name Ponteland Primary School. Our new Year 5 will look distinctive in school as they will wear a navy blue polo shirt rather than the white polo shirt for the rest of school. In addition we are introducing a new school track suit for all children.

We have trained a number of sports leaders in our new Year 5 to help to lead sporting activities in school. They will work under the guidance of our sports coach, Mr Drane, to ensure that all children continue to have the opportunity to experience a wide range of sport in school with the opportunity to compete against other schools. The new Year 5 children are very much looking forward to attending a residential visit in September with children from the other Ponteland Partnership primary schools. In addition we are looking forward to taking part in the schools Shakespeare festival in the autumn term which culminates in a performance at Northern Stage.

Building works update

Internal works at Ponteland First are now well underway to create the new teaching spaces within the existing IT suite. The construction of the new toilets is also progressing well. These building works will enable Ponteland Primary School to accommodate its new Year 5 children September and the Year 6 children in September 2018 before the school moves to its new site, scheduled for 2019.



Internal works at Ponteland First School

DARRAS HALL FIRST SCHOOL

Update from Victoria Parr, Headteacher

As we head towards the end of Summer term, preparations for September are well under way. We have appointed an experienced Year 6 teacher to the role of Upper KS2 Phase Leader; she will be joined by two existing Y4 teachers and one HLTA to form the Y5 team. We are particularly looking forward to the Partnership Primary events that are scheduled for 2017/18 and a number of children from the new Y5 cohort across the Partnership Primaries had the opportunity to meet with each other at our recent Dukeshouse Wood residential information evening.

Children and parents have been extremely complimentary about our new school logo and orders have been flooding in for new uniform. We're looking forward to the new school signs going up before September!

Building works update

Preliminary building work has begun, with the main work due to begin at the start of the Summer holidays. The temporary accommodation that will house our Y5 children will also arrive on site during the Summer holidays

BELSAY FIRST SCHOOL

Update from Clare Cantwell, Headteacher

A joy for Poppy (Y2) this week; whilst working in the library, a huge crane arrived to make a delivery! Poppy had never seen a crane at such close quarters before and was amazed to see it working.



Our new septic tank is now in position! Not the most visible part of our build, but certainly vital to it! Watch the site for big changes as above ground works begin next week.

Building works update

Work on at Belsay is progressing well and on schedule with all excavations completed for the extension. The foundations have also been completed and the steel work is being erected. A new septic tank has also been installed!

RICHARD COATES SCHOOL

Update from Heather Caper, Headteacher

Pupils and staff at Richard Coates have embraced the “busy-ness” alongside the usual summer term “business” with the excited anticipation of our new intake years in September. Key Stage 2 SATs, residential visits to Ford Castle, Kingswood, London and Amsterdam, alongside the long lists of sporting events which take place in the summer term, have ensured school life has continued as normal for our pupils whilst the builders have worked in

corners of the school preparing for our new intake of primary aged children, from Nursery and Reception up to Year 5.

Great fun has been had getting to know our new pupils at our various transition events, including “Northumberland Day”, stay and play sessions and our new intake evenings. Our new children already feel like part of our family!

Whilst our classes are full in all Key Stage 2 year groups, we still have a small number of places available in our Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes.

Plans for the summer months include the development of our early Years outdoor area and the resurfacing of our sports muga pitch.

Building works update

The work to alter the library, old music classroom and create the new link corridor at Richard Coates are well underway and on schedule to be completed on time for the school reducing its age range to include nursery and all primary year groups.

Further updates on progress on will be provided in the Autumn Term.