
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

The Federation of Longhorsley and Whalton Church of England Aided Schools

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10th January 2024

Dear Parents

Happy New Year! Welcome back to the Spring term and 2024! I hope that you all had a great festive break and would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you on behalf of all of the staff for your kind and generous gifts at Christmas; the staffroom was at bursting point with chocolates, homemade goodies and envelopes for staff- there really is no need as we all do it for your children, and love doing it, but it is greatly appreciated and never expected.

New Year Lunches

The Google form has been sent out to invite one parent per family to come along and dine with your Reception or Year 1 child next Wednesday. Mrs Lamb has put together a warming chicken pie with roast potatoes and vegetables and brownie with ice- cream afterwards! We hope you enjoy the meal and creating memories with your child. Please complete the form so we know how many meals to make.

New Starters

I am especially proud of our new Nursery children who have just come straight into school as if they have been coming for months! Well done to all of our new children and a big welcome to our new families too. We look forward to getting to know you better in the coming months.

PE this half term

PE kits are needed every Tuesday and Thursday this half term and we are delighted to have Ms Aldersalde coming in weekly to teach our children gymnastics. Children continue to have their Commando Joe Missions too so lots of active sports and team building going on throughout the week.

Online Safety

As mentioned in my newsletter before Christmas, we have invited our Safeguarding Consultant from Clennell to come in and lead workshops on 'online safety' for both children and yourselves. The Parents' session is on Wednesday 7th February at 9am in the school hall - please email to let us know if you will be attending - many thanks.

Attendance

Many thanks for keeping us informed of absences related to illness or emergency appointments. We continue to follow our Attendance Policy and any unexplained absences will be followed up by the Office on the morning of the absence, so we know the whereabouts of your children to ensure that they are safe. There is still the 48 hour rule if your child has had a sickness bug.

With respect to leave of absence requests, we are receiving a particularly high volume and unless exceptional, they are all deemed unauthorised. Again, we are so thankful for your honesty but need to ensure that we are fulfilling our statutory duty of emphasising the need for your children to be in school- every day counts for their learning and every day is planned for carefully by staff. Work will not be provided for in - term holidays and missing continuous days will lead to gaps in your child's learning. Please look out for and use training days to get cheaper deals or long weekends which don't impact on your child's education. Many thanks for your continued support with this.

We will be sending you an update of your child's current attendance as we review both attendance and the current attendance policy. We aim for 96% attendance (we currently have 17 children with 100% attendance but also 7 children who are below 90% which is deemed as persistent absence). Please see chart below:

Attendance	Description
100-99%	Excellent
96 - 98%	Good
90-95%	Requires Improvement
90%	Persistent Absence

The Education Welfare Officer visits us termly to monitor our attendance and if we feel that we need to support anyone to improve attendance, we will be in touch.

Teaching and Learning

Newsletters outlining the term's topic and curriculum for each class will be sent home this week.

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.

Reception Places

Please remember to apply for your child's Reception place for this September by the deadline of 15th January. Even if you are currently attending our Nursery, you still need to apply formally. Further details are on our websites under admissions.

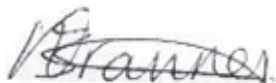
For new Nursery parents, please note, unfortunately a place in our Nursery does not automatically give you a place for our Reception, so please remember to apply, when the time comes, for your child entering Reception.

Middle School places

For all parents, I have written a separate letter to outline some important changes to the admissions criteria for both Chantry and Dr Thomlinson's middle schools from 2025. Please take the time to read.

Finally, many thanks for your continued support in all areas of school life. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries or questions.

Kind regards



Mrs Brannen
Executive Headteacher