

Headteacher's Monthly Update

Term Time Holidays

Please can I ask you to always tell us if you are going on holiday, even for one day, as your children always do even if they have been told to say 'they are ill', 'at the dentists' etc. It makes no difference to our attendance figures- they are still absent- and although I can't authorise it, at least it promotes the importance of honesty and saves the children's embarrassment when they enthusiastically tell us where they have been.

Developments

The tendering process for our extension is now complete and I should hear by next week who has been given the revised contract.

We have just learned that the extension of The Duchess' School will not be completed for September 2017; therefore, temporary accommodation will have to be used on the site. Although not ideal, at least this means they are part of the school community and not on a middle school site elsewhere.

Last week, I contacted the HMI Inspector who carried out our monitoring visit to send her current pupil data and School Improvement Plans. She praised our 'succinct plans' and is happy that we should not need any further monitoring visits, but wished us well for our next scheduled inspection.

Curriculum

Our Creative Curriculum Topic for the Spring Term is 'Visual Variety'- see curriculum overview. Year 1 to 5 will be visiting The Shipley Art Gallery next week as part of this project and EYFS will visit the Lego Dinosaur exhibition at Woodhorn Colliery.

Thank you to those who attended the after-school drop-in to see the curriculum information and assessment expectations for our pupils. Huge thanks to the 'Time Zone' pupils who stayed to help demonstrate some of their learning methods and skills - they really enjoyed it.

Please check the curriculum section of the website to see the reading, writing and maths expectations for each year group for Term 2, and always ask if you need any further guidance.

I attended a PE planning meeting last week with Alnwick Partnership colleagues. We have been able to arrange further 'Multi-skills' festivals for years 3, 4 and 5; a KS2 football festival and some 'friendly' football matches for Year 4 and 5 pupils after-school. I am also hoping we can take part in a tag-rugby competition, cricket festival and that we can host a cross-country event once again.

Staffing

We currently have 2 Northumbria University students with us:

Miss Kayleigh Wilson: Space Base

Year 2 BA Assessed Placement

Miss Lydia Allen: Splash Thursdays

Time Zone Fridays

Year 1 Serial Placement

Mrs Zoe Williams is currently covering Miss Pringle's leave.

Diane Lakey January 2017