Headteacher's Blog July 2018

We can't believe it is nearly the end of term!

Organisation

Thank you very much to everyone who attended a meeting about my organisational plans for Years 3/4/5/and 6 next year; these were well supported.

For those not there, as we will have a bulge of pupils in upper Key Stage 2 next year (31 in Time Zone), the plan is to use staffing flexibly, in order to support pupils in smaller groups. For example, Y6 and Y 5 pupils will be split over two groups for maths and English in the Autumn term. The two year topic curriculum will be maintained, so they will be taught as 3/4 and 5/6 for this, but with additional support as needed. In the Spring Term, Year 6 will be taught more as a separate group, in order to help them prepare for Sats.

Ongoing pupil assessment will inform how pupils are grouped in the core subjects.

The staff teaching in KS2 will be: Miss Baines, Mrs Lakey, Mrs Stapleton, Mrs Dodds, Miss Foster (Student Teacher), Mrs Lester and Miss Pringle. This will be an excellent staff to pupil ratio in order to support the larger pupil numbers.

Year 6 Leavers

Well done to our Year 6s for ending the school year so positively and maturely. It has been a pleasure having them as our first Year 6 pupils. Their behaviour has been outstanding and they have represented us so well at a host of events throughout the year, including on Friday at the beach transition day with Shilbottle school and at Newcastle Cathedral.



As there has been much confusion about the Leavers' arrangements, I would like to clarify our approach-

Many weeks ago I asked all of Year 6 how they would wish to celebrate the end of the year. As usual, we listened to everyone's opinion and voted. The first choice was to go a trampoline park; second to Laser Quest. Unfortunately, neither of those is allowed through the NCC risk assessment system. They chose ten-pin bowling over a cinema option, as they can talk and dance whilst playing. We offered a disco option, but they were not keen, as in fairness, during the Christmas disco in school, they were not that keen on dancing, much preferring the party games. I am personally proud of them: that they can confidently express their opinions; enjoy being sporty and are not rushing to grow up too quickly.

Thank you to PTA who have funded the Leavers' Bibles, gifts and bowling trip.





We hosted another successful Alnwick Partnership of Schools cross-country event. Well done to Walter – the fastest Year 6 boy and our awesome, winning Y5 boys' team.

Request

Following a parental request, please could pupils from Years 1-6 use their Ellingham school water bottles each day. We would send them home on a Friday for cleaning, as pupils like to have their own lids back from the dishwasher. This would help us in reducing cup filling time; enable pupils to have their water available at their work tables; we would have the bottles readily available for visits and after-school activities; as well as reducing single use plastics.

Maths Research Hub

A few months ago, Mrs Stapleton put a bid forward for us to be part of a maths research hub. This was successful and Miss Baines, Mrs Stapleton and I attended a launch event with schools across the north east. This is a two year project which we believe will strengthen our delivery of the maths mastery curriculum and enable us to analyse the impact of developments in this subject, especially with regard to mixed-age teaching. Mrs Stapleton will lead this project in school, which will support her National Professional Qualification in School Leadership.

Acoustic Panels

I am delighted that we are able to progress with the installation of sound absorbing panels in the Hall. This should enhance Worship, PE and lunchtimes, which have all been challenging this year due to the sound reverberation.

I would like to wish you all a happy, safe holiday and look forward to seeing everyone on 5th September (apart from Year 6, whom I wish every success at Duchess's High!)

Kind regards, Diane Lakey