
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

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

Longhorsley St Helen's
C of E Aided First School
Drummonds Close
Longhorsley
MORPETH
Northumberland
NE65 8UT



Whalton C of E Aided First
School

Whalton
MORPETH
Northumberland
NE61 3XH

Tel 01670 788316
Fax 01670 788031
Email: admin@longhorsley-st-helens.northumberland.sch.uk
www.longhorsley-st-helens.northumberland.sch.uk

Mrs N Brannen
Executive Headteacher

Tel 01670 775216

email: whaltonadmin@fedlongwhaltschools.uk
www.whalton.northumberland.sch.uk

10th September 2021

Dear Parents,

A very warm welcome back to the Autumn term! I hope you all had a wonderful summer and a big welcome to all of our new families too.

It has been an absolute delight to meet and greet the children coming back at both schools; they have been amazing, especially our new Reception at Whalton and our Nursery children at Longhorsley - I cannot believe how many siblings there are! Everyone looks so smart as well so thank you so much although I will be sending a little reminder out about earrings.

Staffing:

Mr Carr, Mrs Fox (Longhorsley) and Mr Morris (Whalton) are settling in brilliantly and have really enjoyed their first week at their Federation school. I am sure you will get to know them well.

Huge congratulations to Mrs Robinson, (previously Miss Thompson of Longhorsley) on her wedding during the holidays too.

Unfortunately the schools do not clean themselves, so a huge thankyou to our Caretakers at both schools who have worked so hard cleaning, sweeping and painting, getting the schools ready for the children's return. Teaching staff have made sure that their classrooms were organised and set up ready for learning and Office staff have been in to make sure everything went as smoothly as possible on return; a real team effort! So thank you everyone.

We would also like to welcome Mr Gunn this week as our new Unit Catering Manager at Longhorsley, who, like Mrs Lamb, will prepare and cook our school lunches at Longhorsley, splitting the week between them.

Building updates:

There have been many works completed during the holidays. We are extremely pleased with the new and very swish toilet block for our Class 1 children at Whalton...and the completely renovated bridge from our school to the field.





At Longhorsley, we have had new replacement fences built around the periphery behind the adventure playground and surrounding our EYFS outdoor area too, next to the staff carpark to keep the school and children safe.



Unfortunately, we are still awaiting the installation team to get the long awaited trim trail built on our field, they have promised that it will be third time lucky so fingers crossed that it is sorted in the next couple of weeks for the children to enjoy.

Risk Assessment and Covid control measures:

We are still operating on our previous risk assessment and have maintained class bubbles/groups to help support the transition back into each school, keeping the children and staff as safe as possible after the holidays. Thank you for keeping to the staggered timings at the start and end of the day to help too. Staff continue to 'lateral flow test' twice weekly and children continue to sanitise hands on entry to school, with regular hand washing at specific intervals, thorough cleaning regimes in school and lots of air flow through classrooms.

The new government guidance, with the Local Authority's risk assessment and our knowledge of each school's unique circumstances, are shaping our new risk assessment which will be reviewed and agreed by staff and governors next week too.

The main control measures taken from the new guidance are:

- Ensure good hygiene for everyone
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
- Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of covid 19

A contingency plan will also be in place incase of any further outbreaks. Self-isolation of close contacts has changed dramatically and there is no requirement for children under the age of 18 to self-isolate, even if a family member has tested positive, however, in the best interests of keeping our schools safe and open, please can you let us know (and if possible get your child tested too, as many if you have done), if anyone in your family tests positive. Thank you! As

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previously, if any child is absent due to Covid (and well enough to do work), then we will provide Remote Education for them instead.

Learning Journeys

You will be receiving your child's learning journeys outlining what they will be learning over the term, and a newsletter from your class teacher by the end of next week. Assessments are taking place already to see how much recall the children have on their prior learning and to identify any further gaps in their knowledge.

Finally...Your thoughts

As we are planning ahead to events, such as Harvest and Christmas as Church of England Schools, we would really like to gather your opinions on how we can move forward safely with these. There will be a Google form coming out next week which asks you to select the model that you believe is the best in the current climate and a space for further comments. Please do take a few moments to complete this and return by Friday 17th September – your input is much appreciated.

Here's to a great Autumn term!

Kind regards,

Mrs Brannen
Executive Headteacher



