
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

The Federation of Longhorsley and Whalton Church of England Aided Schools

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7th January 2025

Dear Parents

Happy New Year!

Welcome back to the Spring term and 2025! 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 gifts at Christmas (and well wishes), 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

As advertised in the diary dates, we would like to invite one parent per family to come along and dine with your Year 2 or Year 3 child next Thursday. Miss Johnson is doing a roast turkey dinner followed by apple crumble and custard afterwards! We hope you enjoy the meal and creating memories with your child. Please complete this [google form](#) so we know how many meals to make.

PE this half term

PE kits are needed every Tuesday and Thursdays this term. Liz Naylor - a specialist Gymnastics coach from Wansbeck Gymnastics Club will be teaching the children this half term for gymnastics every Thursday afternoon as part of their PE Curriculum. Children continue to have their Commando Joe Missions too so lots of active sports and team building going on throughout the week as well through the RESPECT curriculum.

Y4 Robinwood Residential

We have again arranged for children in Years 4 and 5 to attend the fabulous Robinwood Activity Centre at Barhaugh Hall, Alston for three days and two nights in May (12th to 14th) with the Year 4 children from Whalton and Cambo.

The children will have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities over the three days and make new friends.

Although we subsidise through our Sports Premium Grant, there will be a cost involved, however, until we have the number of children likely to attend we are unable to advise the amount, (last year the cost was £200). Payments can be made in four monthly instalments prior to the visit through your child's School Gateway account.

Please can you complete the following [google form](#) to indicate whether you would like your child to attend the visit. Further information about Robinwood is available on their website [here](#).

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, unfortunately, 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. 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 from last term next week as we review both attendance and the current attendance policy with the new government guidance. We aim for 96% attendance but never expect you to send your child in poorly. Thank you so much for your continued support.

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. There are a series of model letters that we will need to send out too if your child hits a trigger point. Please understand that these are what we are being asked to do, but we also know that we have great relationships with yourselves, so please do not be put off by the wording of some of these!

Teaching and Learning

Newsletters outlining the term's topic and curriculum for each class will be sent home this week, so that you know what your child will be learning.

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.

Our Federated School

Just before the Christmas holidays we had our Church Inspection at Longhorsley, which is similar to an Ofsted but has no gradings. We are delighted that Longhorsley is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. As it is our federated school, I have attached it in case anyone would like a read. The Federation and Whalton both get a mention!

Morning Routine

Following a number of parental requests about children lining up before coming into school, we are bringing back the grid from next Monday as we do really miss seeing you altogether in the mornings too. So, children can still be dropped off from 8.40am still (please make sure that there is a member of staff there). The bell will ring just after 8.45am so that the children can line up and be welcomed before coming into school for 8.50am through the main door. Any problems, please let us know!

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. Here's to a fabulous 2025!

Kindest regards,

Mrs Brannen
Executive Headteacher