



## **Cotherstone School Governing Body Newsletter – December 2019**

It's been a busy year at Cotherstone Primary School and a year of change, most notably with the departure of Dr Jellis at the end of the summer term and our new head teacher Mrs Matthewman taking over at the start of the autumn term. Governors are extremely pleased to report these new arrangements are working well and we continue to see the positive impact Mrs Matthewman is having at the school, driving improvements and with a keen eye for making savings and getting value for money. We very much look forwards to continuing to work with Mrs Matthewman in the new year and thank her for the work she has done so far.

It's been a busy term at Cotherstone Primary School. Our Reception children have made a great start to their school life and the pupils have settled into their new year-groups. This term has been busy, the children have done a fabulous job fundraising; raising money for the RSPCA with a non-uniform day and raising money for Children in Need with a 'Horrendous Hair' day. Children have shown what talented young people they are in the run up to Christmas, singing and playing instruments at the Cantata and in the class 1 nativity play. Governors would like to extend their sincere thanks to all the staff, and volunteers at the school for everything they do for our pupils and families. It was lovely to see so many parents joining the children in school last Friday for a festive Christmas lunch – particular thanks to Barbara for her hard work preparing such a lovely meal (for so many extra people!) and to the lunch time supervisors and volunteers without whom this couldn't have taken place.

Parents will be aware that one of our Class 1 teachers, Mrs Hogg, is leaving the school at the end of this term. The governors would like to thank Mrs Hogg for her hard work at the school and wish her all the very best for the future.

### **Ofsted**

Cotherstone Primary School was last inspected in February 2013 and received the rating 'Outstanding' which meant it was exempt from inspection under the old framework. From September 2019, Ofsted has begun to inspect schools under a new [framework](#), with a key focus on the curriculum. A small number of schools in Durham have already been inspected under this new framework and very few outstanding schools have retained their grading. We anticipate a visit to our school from Ofsted is likely in the near future and our current own school assessment is that Cotherstone Primary School is 'Good'. We are very lucky to have Mrs Matthewman who is using all her experience and expertise from Bowes Hutchinson (who

were inspected earlier this year and retained their 'Outstanding' rating) to support staff to develop and make further improvements at our school in the new year.

### **Friends of Cotherstone school (FOCS)**

The governors would like to thank FOCS for their continued support and commitment to raise money for the school; and to parents, relatives and friends of the children who have generously supported these fundraising activities. Christmas card sales, wreath making, carol singing and refreshments at events are just a few of the activities they have taken on this term. The FOCS have been able to use this money to support the school by buying additional music resources, costumes for the nativity and subsidising transport for school trips. If you are interested in lending a hand in the future, please contact Kelly Green.

### **Our Governing Body**

This term, governors have visited school to discuss a variety of curriculum areas with staff, including English, Maths, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and RE. The current members of our governing body are as follows:

Alison Butler, Alison Lamb, Chris Matthewman, Richard Batchelor, Alison Sabey, Rachel Atkinson, Cllr Richard Bell, Tamsin Coulson, Teresa Wilcox, Louise Whitburn, Daniel Blagdon.

If you'd like to find out more about the work of the governing body or are interested in joining us, please speak to any of our members.

**From all the governors at Cotherstone Primary School we wish you all a very merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.**

**School reopens Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January**

