

Cotherstone Primary School

Governors' Newsletter Spring Term (1) 2016

This is our first opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year!

Governor Visits Into School:

Peter Webb, our Governor with Special Interest in Special Education Needs, visited the school and noted the following points.

The school received £9240 as part of its Pupil Premium fund. Pupil Premium is allocated based upon the numbers of children who are eligible for Free School Meals. This allows the school to fund an additional 5 hours of teaching assistant time for specific learning support and contributes towards teacher salary to maintain the small group size.

During the spring term an audit of SEN resources is planned and the production of resource packs to enhance pupils' motor skills.

The school is working towards the Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) and will complete the IQM baseline audit which will result in a new action plan.

Progress made by SEN pupils is monitored by assessments and observations and help to form pupils' targets for the next stage of their learning.

Jane Ayre, our Governor with Special Interests in Literacy and Safeguarding visited the school earlier this half-term to carry out visits in both of these interest areas. The Literacy visit focussed upon the school's approach to writing. During this visit the Head Teacher explained the emphasis that is put upon writing during the weekly "Big Write" and how, following a recent monitoring assessment, the same standards expected from children during this weekly activity will now be applied in all lessons in order to ensure high standards and presentation, regardless of the subject being taught. A Governor Safeguarding visit is required every term. In previous visits Jane has met with children from across the school to find out their views of safety and wellbeing in relation to their time in school. This latest visit focussed upon safeguarding policies and procedures which are in place within the school and how these are implemented and understood by staff. This visit also included discussions with classroom support staff and lunch-time supervision staff.

Our Governor with a Special Interest in Music and Performing Arts, Alison Lamb visited school this half term. Alison found that 'the requirements of the music curriculum are delivered in a lively, modern and engaging way. The pupils show an obvious pleasure in using their voices, playing instruments and composing music on their own and with others. The children demonstrate creativity, self-confidence and a genuine sense of achievement. Key Stage 1 pupils use their voices to learn songs, chants and rhymes and use percussion to explore rhythm. Key Stage 2 are currently learning to play the ukulele and enjoying the music of George Formby. Individual lessons are available for pupils who wish to learn the flute or violin.'

Governor Ofsted Training:

The Government have recently introduced changes to the way in which Ofsted Inspections are undertaken in schools. It is vitally important that Governors understand these changes and how they impact upon the day to day running of the school as well as the longer-term planning for the school. For this reason an Ofsted Governors training session has been arranged in school for the early part of the next half-term which will be run by Durham County Council personnel.

School Kitchen

After a recent inspection we are delighted to inform you that the school kitchen has been awarded 5 Food Hygiene Stars, the highest rating possible. We would like to say well done to the kitchen staff.

Thank You:

The Governors would like to say a big thank you to the Friends of Cotherstone School for recently purchasing a new reading scheme and additional ipads for the school. These additional resources will be well used and benefit all children in the school. The Friends do an amazing job in supplementing the school's finances and we know they are working hard on a number of other fundraising activities throughout the rest of this academic year. Your support with their activities is much appreciated.

CKC Update:

The drums have been sounding at CKC this half term at the activity session run by Jack Drum arts. The children have enjoyed playing the instruments and learning rhythm songs and dance routines.

Next half term we are welcoming back the popular craft sessions delivered by the Bowes Museum. Learn about digging trenches and finding treasures from the past with a fun look into archaeology with Harriet Sams and the sports session this time will be quick sticks hockey.

Please remember to sign up for the sessions with Mrs Sabey at the school office.

CKC activity programme Feb-Mar 2016

Tuesday Afternoon - Crafts with Bowes Museum

Wednesday Afternoon - Learn about archaeology with Harriet Sams

Thursday Afternoon - Quick Sticks Hockey

The club sessions run from after school until 4:30pm, children are offered a small snack before the session starts to keep them going until home time.

CKC runs from 3:15pm to 5:15pm every day after school, the children are provided with a safe and fun environment to play and relax after school.

Farewell and Good Luck:

Finally we would like to say farewell and good luck to Victoria McIntyre who has been in school over the last couple of half-terms on a placement as part of her teacher training degree. Miss McIntyre has been a very popular and hard-working member of our team. We wish her well for the future.

We hope you have an enjoyable half-term break!

If you have any issue that you would like to raise with the Governing Body please contact Jane at ayretj@aol.com or 650699.