



Executive Headteacher: Mrs C A Matthewman
Chair of Governors: Mr P Nicholls
Vice Chair of Governors: Mrs A Butler



From: The Chair of Governors of the Bowes Cotherstone Federation

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Dear Parent/Carer,

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2021

Introduction

As we reach the end of this half term, we can reflect on a considerable amount of hard work from the children, their teaching and support staff and the respective Friends of the Schools.

There was a welcome return to Pre-COVID arrival and departure times.

What is particularly pleasing is the number of collaborative ventures that our schools have achieved. The highly successful residential trip in September brought together 32 children from Bowes and Cotherstone Schools on a three day camping and activity filled experience. This takes the children out of their comfort zones and involves them in challenging and hugely enjoyable water based and land based activities which enables them to work together and challenge their thinking about what is possible.

The children were a credit to their schools and every one took part in the activities and I am sure that many of you will have seen the dramatic photographs of their exploits. Once again we were indebted to the Directing Staff for their expertise and professionalism, ensuring that however hazardous the activity seemed, it was always conducted safely and under strict risk management policies. In short, they enjoyed themselves tremendously.

KS1 also enjoyed an interesting day at Raby Castle with history on show and plenty of deer to watch within the extensive grounds.

More similar joint ventures are planned for the Bowes Cotherstone Federation.

COVID-19

At the time of writing, Cotherstone School is experiencing a challenging time with outbreaks of COVID affecting children and teaching staff alike. We hope that the half term holiday will enable a period of isolation to stem the rise in cases and we wish all those affected a swift and speedy return to health.

Of course what this underlines is the importance of ensuring that when offered you readily accept the invitation to receive the COVID vaccine. Booster inoculations are now being offered to those who received their second dose six months ago.

It also brings into focus the need for care and attention to hand hygiene and the wearing of masks in appropriate situations. This will help safeguard individuals who may be at greater risk through underlying health issues or severely weakened immune systems.

Flu jabs are also available through your GP Surgery now.

Please stay safe.

School Activities

I have mentioned the joint activities, but please remember that the BCF allows both schools to retain their own identities and so a balanced curriculum is taught at Bowes and Cotherstone.

Cotherstone

Perhaps the most significant new activity is the advent of Little Learners where Pre-School children are being introduced to EYFS at Cotherstone school. All reports suggest that this is a hugely successful venture.

Cotherstone Village Show allowed much success for the school pupils and they can all feel proud of their efforts. Beowulf, the quest to find Grendel the foul fiend, the hideous sea-hag and a monstrous sea-dragon has also been studied by the pupils. Great stuff of legend.

The Harvest Festival will be held this week but sadly COVID restrictions has meant that it will not take place in Church and will be confined to children and school staff only.

The children have been learning about Roman numerals. SPQR.

Bowes

The children have been enjoying their new gym equipment which was installed during the summer holidays with financial assistance from FOBS and a grant from the National Lottery.

School Garden Club was hugely successful at the recent Bowes Show and the children's entries were well received by the judges and public alike.

It was wonderful to welcome children, parents and carers back into St Giles' Church for the Harvest Festival on 23rd September. 120 people in church enjoyed a lovely service led by Penny and the children donated lots of harvest produce. We were able to donate some to the Barnard Castle Food Bank and a record amount of £1,011 was raised at the Auction of Produce on the following Monday evening.

The children all studied languages from some of our nearest neighbours (France, Spain and Germany) for the European Day of Languages.

The Macmillan Coffee Morning raised valuable funds for this important charity.

Teaching and Support Staff

I have already mentioned the impact of COVID on some of the teaching staff at Cotherstone School. This only reinforces the fact that in spite of the detailed risk management practices employed at school, COVID is very real indeed.

Once again our grateful thanks go to those staff entrusted with the education of our children. We hope that they all enjoy the half term break.

Bowes Cotherstone Federation (BCF)

The BCF is incredibly successful and the Governing Body looks strategically across both schools and shares resources and expertise to work to maintain standards of teaching and learning and leadership.

Put simply we are Growing Together, Learning Together.

It just remains for me, on behalf of the Bowes Cotherstone Federation Governing Body, to wish you and your families well over this Half Term period.

We look forward to welcoming you back in readiness for the busy run up to the Christmas period.

Stay safe.

Peter Nicholls

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