



From: The Chair of Governors of the Bowes Cotherstone Federation

19 July 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2022

Introduction

As we approach the end of another academic year on Wednesday, we can reflect on another exciting and rewarding year.

Notably the children can look back with a good deal of satisfaction after their positive approach to learning after the truncated effects of COVID during the previous two years. They have worked hard and have achieved much inspired by their industrious teaching and support staff.

We said our fond farewells to Mrs Matthewman at Easter and welcomed Mr Batchelor, who has been promoted to Executive Headteacher on an interim basis whilst Miss Thomas similarly stepped up to Deputy Headteacher at Cotherstone and Miss Heaviside came in as the new Class 2 teacher.

This year the children celebrated the Platinum Jubilee. The 70th anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II to the throne on 6 February 1952. This unique occasion is unlikely to ever be matched or exceeded.

The current unusually hot weather with extremes of temperature reminds us all about the impact of global warming and the need for us to think carefully about our environment for future generations.

We are pleased to welcome our new Rector of the Lower Teesdale Benefice Revd Canon David Tomlinson. David lives in Cotherstone and will lead collective worship at St Giles' Bowes and St Cuthbert's Cotherstone. He will also be joining the Governing Body as a Foundation Governor.

COVID-19

We are by no means out of the woods yet regarding COVID but the risk assessments that have been faithfully followed in school have reduced the risk

of spread. Vigilance must remain however if we are to effectively control the virus.

School Activities

Please remember that the BCF allows both schools to retain their own identities and so a balanced curriculum is taught at both Bowes and Cotherstone. This newsletter can only offer a snapshot of the myriad activities and events that the children enjoy.

Cotherstone

Suffice to say the advent of Little Learners has been a huge success at Cotherstone with the Preschool now incorporated into the school. It is predicted that they will go from strength to strength.

The second half of the summer term has seen much in the way of educational games and outdoor activity. A day of traditional games saw Hook a Duck, Splat the Rat!, Penalty Shoot Out, Pin the tail on the Corgi and many others. Cotherstone also took part in the NSPCC Big Playtime including Rounders and Board games.

Sports day was a great success and educational visits to Killhope lead mine and Locomotion were enjoyed by all.

Another hugely successful visit to the school was made by a local resident farmer to talk about egg production with some of the hens making an appearance.

Year 6 pupils sat and received their SATS results. The first cohort to do so since 2019. Their hard work and dedication resulted in positive outcomes. Very well done.

Bowes

The Platinum Jubilee party and Teddy Bear's picnic were enjoyable occasions but bad weather forced the fun to go inside. Some children went to a prestigious awards ceremony at Staindrop School where they received awards for outstanding achievement, effort, leadership or teamwork. Congratulations to those involved.

KS1 went to Hardwick Park (much improved weather).

This year the Leavers' Service at Ripon Cathedral was held in the afternoon which allowed the children to go to Leyburn first. The play equipment has been greatly enhanced since we were last there and the packed lunches were enjoyed before the service at the cathedral. The cathedral's Director of Music put us through our singing pieces before the service and afterwards Dean John let us tour the cathedral and the crypt. Ripon celebrates its 1350th birthday this year and it is incredible to think that there has been a Cathedral on the site since AD672.

The first Sports Day since 2019 was enjoyed by all and Beech won but all enjoyed their athletics activities.

Teaching and Support Staff

None of the above would be possible without the staff at both schools. They have once again ensured through their hard work, industry, commitment and professionalism that your children have received the quality of teaching and learning that we have come to expect from our small outstanding rural schools. Do remember your teachers this summer when you are away on holiday or enjoying a staycation.

Friends of the Schools

The Friends of the two schools are charitable based organisations who exist solely to serve the interests of the children at both schools. Every penny raised for fundraising goes to their respective school to supplement educational excellence. Any additional parents/carers who wish to join either Friends organisation would be more than welcome.

Friends of Cotherstone School (FOCS)

Kelly Green is Chair, Rachel Atkinson Vice Chair, Claire Carr Treasurer and Vicky Hindle Secretary. Meetings are held in the Fox and Hounds in Cotherstone on a termly basis. FOCS have helped with funding the Zoolab visit, transport to Killhope and Locomotion plus Sports day medals and treats.

Friends of Bowes School (FOBS)

The FOBS lottery is live and you can join through the Facebook page or by contacting Committee Members, Tina Bainbridge Chair, Vicky Addison Vice Chair, Laura Drew Treasurer or Peter Nicholls Secretary.

FOBS are holding a Car Boot sale at Guide Post Corner Bowes on Sunday 24 July between 10-12 noon, all welcome.

FOBS have also funded the coach to Ripon and provided snacks and ice creams for the Jubilee celebrations and Sports Day.

Future School Plans and Staffing Arrangements

Both schools continue to plan ahead to enhance facilities and to maintain the high standards of educational excellence at Bowes and Cotherstone. I have also ensured that you have been kept fully informed of the recruitment arrangements for our new Headteacher.

The post of Executive Headteacher was readvertised in accordance with the regulations and the closing date for applications is 12 September and the interview date will be 26 September. All candidates will be considered under fair and open competition and the permanent appointment made from January 2023.

Transitioning Pupils to Secondary School

Both schools will be holding Leavers' Services this Wednesday. Bowes will be at St Giles' Church Bowes at 1030hrs and Cotherstone either in School or on the School field at 1330hrs. All are very welcome to attend.

These are important services to wish our Year 6 pupils well on their continuing educational journey.

Year 6 pupils at both schools have been subject to COVID restrictions since they were in Year 3. They have proven however what a resilient cohort they are and have been a credit to their respective school.

Year 6 children building towards the final phase of their primary education rightly experience a whole range of emotions when they move from one chapter of their life to another. After all, most of them have been at our schools for seven years. They will most likely feel huge affection for it, both as a physical space and as a place which has provided them with such wonderful experiences, great friends and memorable moments.

Special mention must be made of Class 3 teachers Mrs MacInnes and Miss Thomas who have guided them with great commitment and led them to this important transition in their educational journey.

Good luck to them as they prepare for secondary school in September.

It just remains for me, on behalf of the Bowes Cotherstone Federation (BCF) Governing Body to wish you and your families well over the summer holidays.

We look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Stay safe.

Peter Nicholls

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