

Melsonby Methodist Primary School

Newsletter

Acting Executive Headteacher – Mr R Linsley
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Friday 15th May 2020

I would like to start the newsletter this week by thanking parents for their support and open and honest dialogue during the week. The educational landscape changed on Sunday with the announcement from the Prime Minister about schools reopening to Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y6 pupils with a priority of supporting those pupils in early years.

Currently we have a plan for a phased return of pupils to school and we are looking at the guidance to see how best we can accommodate the year groups required and still support the children of 'Key Workers'. It is an anxious time for parents, pupils, staff and governors. As Headteacher my overriding responsibility is to ensure the safety of everyone in school and for that reason we are taking time to ensure 'lengthy' government guidance and risk assessments are in place and staffing levels are appropriate. It has helped us greatly in our planning that parents have confirmed if their child is attending when we reopen. These numbers will help us plan a safe and secure return as we do not have a full compliment of staff to use.

I will send a letter out to parents on Wednesday next week outlining the exact plans we have put in place however I can share that initially we will not be able to provide a breakfast club or after school provision. We will be having a staggered start for both classes and pupils will be in a 'bubble' with a Teacher and a TA for the day based on a maximum number of 15 - more than that will lead to establishing two groups which will not mix. Break times and lunch times will operate as normal depending on numbers and equipment will be limited. Regular handwashing and using the outside space will be central to our plans and we will replicate the home learning tasks that those pupils not in school will receive. We have been asked to limit the number of adults entering the school site, we would request only one parent/carer to bring pupils and that you adhere to social distancing rules (2 metres) outside of school. Parents will not be allowed to enter the school building and must contact the office with any queries. As you can appreciate there is a lot to think about from the guidance we have been given and that is only a small snapshot of how life in school will be significantly different from the school experience they had when they left.

Finally, I'm not one to get upset or angry on a regular basis unless it involves Sunderland FC! However I've been really upset and angry with how some members of the press have 'gone in' on the teaching profession for not standing up or doing their bit. I know that unions are meeting the government to discuss regulations and a return to work and some guidance does need clarifying however some reporting has been grossly unfair. I would like to clarify to our parents that all members of school staff have been supportive and generous with their time since we began lockdown. Some staff have volunteered to support other families at local Hubs and they have all been positive and proactive about plans to reopen. I am extremely proud of them and thankful for the understanding and support of governors and the local community.

Take Care and Stay Safe

Mr Linsley



**THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE FEDERATION OF NORTH & SOUTH COWTON CP SCHOOL AND
MELSONBY METHODIST PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dear Parent/Carer

Executive Headteacher

I trust that this message finds you and your family safe and well.

I would like to bring you up to date with information about the Governors' plans to recruit a new permanent Executive Headteacher.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent impact on the operation of schools in the UK has made it impossible for us to make suitable arrangements to advertise and then to interview potential applicants before the key end of May date; other schools are in a similar situation. The schools need to be in full session so that we can see candidates in action in assemblies, classroom practice, pupil interviews and during lunchtime. Any online Skype interviews would not be an acceptable substitute for such an important job. The education world is in a difficult place just now and teachers are concentrating their energies elsewhere.

Accordingly, we have asked Richard Linsley if he will continue for another term and this he has willingly agreed to do.

The new plan

Although we still don't know what the immediate future holds we have a tentative plan. Our revised recruitment process will now re-commence in August with interviews in October. Clearly there are a number of factors which could influence this plan's progress but we are working with North Yorkshire County Council to ensure that we achieve the best solution for our two precious village schools.

We will do our best to keep you informed should there be any significant change to our plan.

Best Wishes to you all

Stuart Priestley

Chair of Governors of

The Federation of North South Cowton CP School and Melsonby Methodist Primary School