



SETTLE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL - GOVERNOR NEWS

(Issue Seven: 20/05/19)

Dear Parent/Guardian

Staffing, reorganisation and thanks!

Reception Class – A big thank you to Mrs Barton, who has been covering maternity leave for Mrs Downham this last year and who will sadly be leaving us after the half term break, due to family and personal commitments. We thank her for her hard work and for staying on after Easter, following the news that Mrs Downham was not returning. After the half term, the Reception Class will be overseen by Mrs Hopley, who will also be one of the children's class teachers next year in Class One. Mrs Hopley will continue to be supported by Mrs Wright, our Early Years Coordinator, as well as Mrs Carpenter and our experienced Early Years Team, to ensure provision and day to day experiences for the children are unaffected. Mrs Barton will complete the class reports in the coming weeks and we hope to see her return for the class trip later in the summer.

Class Two – A big thank you to Mrs Shortreed, Mrs Hopley and Mrs Horsfall for working so hard to teach and support Class 2 in the absence of Mrs Hulse these last few weeks. Thanks also for the additional help provided by Miss Wright and Mrs Wright in supporting the children during their SATs. We look forward to Mrs Hulse returning to school after the half term break.

Skate Park

Thank you to everyone who submitted a feedback form for the Town Council's proposed plans for a Skate Park in the adjacent park area next to the school. We received almost fifty replies and the majority of replies (over ninety percent) share a common view. **There is support for a Skate Park but NOT in the proposed location.** The views of parents have been shared with the Town Council but no names have been shared. Mr Wright and I have met with the Town Council to discuss the proposals and we have passed on parent comments to the Council. The school is awaiting updated plans for the park and are unable to support current proposals to upgrade the park as they stand unless the plans are radically changed. Like the majority of our parents we are keen for the Council to proactively address a number of concerns including:

The Memorial – there is currently a family Memorial in the Park and any proposal must ensure that the family are properly consulted and their views respected and considered. The Memorial received planning permission to be sited in a Toddler Play Park and the proposals as they stand will radically change the ambience of the Park and the setting for the Memorial. The Memorial Site needs to be properly respected and taken into account when any decision is made.

Unsuitable Location for a Skate Park – We are in favour of the park being upgraded and receiving some loving care but the current plans for a Skate Park are vastly different to the plans originally shared with school two years ago and raise a number of concerns. The school governors share the views of many parents who are having difficulty seeing how the Skate Park will complement or add to the existing Park. The proposals as they stand, would struggle in the space provided, to offer quality provision for toddlers, primary age children and teenagers/adults skating. There is sadly not enough space to deliver for all parties and we are concerned that a park designed by the children of the school in partnership with the Town Council back in 2002 is in danger of being modified to support older children/adults *at the expense of young children and their families*. Many have raised a number of safeguarding concerns and a number have cited issues regarding day to day monitoring and policing of the park. There has been a lot of concern voiced regarding the loss of green spaces, including bushes shrubs and trees to permanently alter the look and feel of the park.

Choosing a better location – there are many who believe that a more suitable location can be found and the most popular choice seems to be the old Middle School Site. The Town Council have been asked to clarify as to whether the Middle School Site can be reconsidered. There are many mixed messages in the community regarding the possible use of other sites and the school is awaiting written confirmation as to whether the Middle School site or an alternative site can be used. We are in favour of enhancing facilities for teenagers but not at the expense of our young families or to the detriment of our school community.

Awaiting a final draft – We await revised plans from the Town Council. The concerns raised by parents and the school will need to be proactively addressed or we will not be able to support the plans for the project. We believe that plans should not be rushed ahead when there have been so many concerns raised by local residents and families. Any development of the park area needs to be representative of the views of Settle residents. The teenagers deserve amazing new facilities but the plans and proposals need to be in the right place or no one will be really gaining anything. We await the Town Council's revised plans with anticipation.

Kind regards

Michael Gudgeon

Chair of Governors