



4th September 2019

Dear Parent /Guardian

Welcome to the start of a new academic year in which we formally begin a new Federation arrangement with Kirkby Malham Primary. Exciting times lie ahead. This year we will seek to develop increasingly closer connections between the two schools with joint staff professional training development days and class teaching and learning curriculum events planned throughout the year.

We now function under one single governing body and in the coming weeks we will provide parents with information as to the new governing body composition, which will be made up of governor representatives chosen from both school communities.

The aim of the Federated arrangement is to further improve the provision, capacity and expertise of both schools and we hope that the parents and children will see the benefits of our closer working arrangement first hand with the planned activities taking place this year.

Leadership Structure

As Executive Headteacher of the Federation I will continue to oversee the running of both schools and shall continue to work very closely with Miss Thompson (Deputy Headteacher at Settle CE Primary and Mrs Allen (Assistant Headteacher) who will oversee the day to day running when I am off site or working in the neighbouring school.

Welcoming new staff

One of the benefits of Federation is that the expertise of the two schools is instantly magnified when we have new staff appointments. From September 2019 Kirkby Malham Primary School welcomes Mrs Debbie Cummins and Mrs Rachael Aldridge, who will be working in the admin role to support Mrs Eccleston in her role. Kirkby Malham Primary also welcomes Miss Sue Wood, who will be working as a special needs support and general TA. All three staff have past experience working in various roles at Settle CE Primary School and it is to the benefit of both schools that we retain their expertise.

At Settle CE Primary School I am delighted to welcome Mrs Sarah Spensley back to our school in the position of Reception teacher and Miss Ambrose who will share Class 4/5 duties with Mrs Drewery. Both teachers are experienced and have fantastic teaching and leadership track records in their previous schools. Both schools are strengthened by the new expertise that they bring with them.

I am also very excited to see Mrs Elliott return to work as administrator at Settle CE Primary School following her recent sickness leave. She will share duties with Mrs Ogden and Mrs Aldridge to further strengthen our admin team. Welcome back Mrs Elliott!

Increased Expertise

In recent years, local schools have seen a decline in Local Authority and general school support services across the region. This has led rural schools to partner with other schools locally, for example through the Skipton based Castle Alliance and to access expertise from

each other. What is especially exciting about our new Federation arrangement is that now with our combined expertise we are fast becoming a lead school in terms of the expertise that we are able to collectively offer. This benefits not only our school, but other schools locally.

We have a number of areas of outstanding strength including: Early Years Provision, special educational needs, safeguarding, Computing, STEM, Sport, Assessment, Mathematics and English. Parents can be reassured that if their child requires extra support in a particular specialist area then we will likely have suitably qualified and experienced staff members (including several 'Lead Teachers') who can be on hand to offer their expertise.

Class Routines

In the coming days teachers will issue letters outlining the particular class routines for your child and will provide an overview of some of the topics and key aspects of learning your child will be focusing upon this year. Staff will keep parents up to date via regular letters/correspondence which will be sent out electronically. Please make sure you complete the contact forms, as required, so that we have all your up to date details – including medical information so that we can double check and amend our records if you need to update anything.

School Newsletters

Regular newsletters will be issued each half term celebrating school achievements, updating parents on key information and outlining future school events. At Settle CE Primary these newsletters will usually originate from the class teachers and at Kirkby Malham the letters will be put together collectively via the school admin. We will also be issuing an Executive Headteacher newsletter each half term, as well as a termly update from the Governing body.

A list of clubs and start dates will be sent out in due course.

We will also be sending out a timetable of key events for the year, including joint school event days, parents evening dates, Class Assembly and Nativity/Church Service dates.

Websites and Facebook Pages

Both schools retain their own websites and these will be used to display general information about the schools. The Facebook Pages will continue to celebrate achievements and special events. The main source of day to day/termly information though will be via the class teacher newsletters at Settle and the general newsletter of Kirkby Malham Primary.

School Dinners

School dinners are delicious and cost £2.25 per child. At present all our cooked meals are made on site, fully meet government nutritional standards and provide excellent value for money. Parents are welcome to join us for dinner – just let the secretary know if you want to book a slot. Visitor/adult meals cost £2.70.

School PTA

Please note that we have benefited enormously through the years by having a vibrant and active PTA at both schools – this year we invite new parents to get involved. Look out for details of meeting dates being set up this term.

Snacks at Playtimes

Please note that we encourage pupils to bring in healthy fruit and vegetable snacks only into school. There are a number of pupils who have allergies (whether these be with milk, nuts or other products) and certain snacks present a health and safety concern to them. Healthy fruit and vegetable snacks may be brought in only. Both schools discourage any nut products from being brought into school.

Discouraging Sweets as a treat!

This year we would like to discourage the giving out of sweets as an automatic treat. The national consumption of sugary foods and drinks is reaching alarming proportions and the number of health-related issues is increasing. Over the year we wish to maintain our Healthy School status and increase the consumption of fresh water, fruit and vegetables and draw attention away from the temptation to go for sugary treats., It will be a message that we will keep emphasizing this year. When sending your child to school with Pack Ups, please go for healthy options and avoid sugary drinks and sweets.

Uniform

School uniform must be worn during the school day unless we have special events such as "COME AS YOU PLEASE DAY" - black shoes or trainers also need to be worn. The school shirt is white and trousers and skirts may be black or grey. School dresses are blue at Settle and red at Malham. Children need to have a school book bag for books and school letters. These are easy to store and manage. Please contact the school office if you are short of anything and they will help you out. Uniform for Settle Primary is purchased through Mr Woodrow and 3 Peaks Sports (see website for link page) and Kirkby Malham uniform may be ordered via MC Sports in Skipton.

This Federation represents both Settle and Kirkby Malham Primary Schools – Maintaining a healthy School/Parent Partnership is incredibly important!

If, during the year, you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's education or well-being then I urge you to let the class teacher know immediately. If issues persist then please do not hesitate to contact me personally. I want you and your child to always feel comfortable and happy and for you to know that the school can always be approached if there are ever any difficulties. We do not claim to be perfect, but we are professional and we always want to offer the best service we can to our families. If we can do things better, then we will.

Remember, we work in partnership with *you* to do the best for your child – your views and insight are always valued.

Remember also that I expect our school staff to put the child first in all matters. Our prime concern and priority will be acting in the best *interests of the children*. This is our job and we are proud and privileged to do it. If we have any differences then they are often quickly resolved when we remember to put the child first in all our decision making.

However also note that we have high standards of discipline and no child should be allowed to affect the education of their peers. We will work with parents to ensure good standards in school and be proactive if standards fall. A new positive behavior policy for both schools was updated in July and will be re-released in the coming days. Please read through this document carefully. It outlines our practice for instilling good behavior and the actions that we will take if behavior is not as it should be. Excellent attendance is also important, as is arriving at school on time. Parental support for attendance and behaviour is essential. Without proper support children risk falling behind in school and even exclusion. If parents and schools work together then pupils will always do their best and reach their potential.

It is great to be back and I look forward to speaking with all the children about their summer adventures and to meeting with parents of both schools in the coming days.

Let's work together to make this an exciting and rewarding year for all our pupils - your support and encouragement is always welcomed and greatly appreciated.

Kind regards

Mr Richard Wright
Executive Headteacher