

Norton & West Chinnock Schools

Learning Together for Excellence

www.nortonandwestchinnockschools.co.uk

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Co-Heads Newsletter 17th December 2021

A festive welcome to this half termly newsletter to help keep you abreast of current news items and information that is happening in the schools at a more strategic level.

Celebrating Christmas Together:

We start by reflecting on how brilliantly the children have done in the build-up to Christmas this year. As Headteachers, we have had the privilege of seeing all the Nativities and Services at the schools and churches. Every performance has been wonderful, uplifting and filled with festive spirit. We thank the staff, parents and churches for making the events happen successfully (and safely) and for enabling us all to celebrate this special time of year together.

The theme that has stood out in all the events is how the children have taken a lead in producing their performances. From this, we can see that the magic of Christmas for our children has shone through. We are proud of their accomplishments and it means so much to us to have been able to invite parents along again.

Some memorable highlights have included:

An a cappella rendition of It Was On a Starry Night at Norton. This was a moving moment for everyone at church, with angelic sounds reverberating around the nave which haven't been heard for over 18 months. As with all the singing, it was wonderful to experience.

The confident performances of our younger children narrating, singing and acting out their roles with many of them enjoying their first ever live nativity. They all looked the part in their traditional costumes helping to retell the story of the first Christmas.

A unique recital of The Twelve Days of Christmas at West Chinnock where the children held up their own pictures whilst singing the carol at an ever quicker pace. The children pulled it off with great aplomb (the performance made all the more special by the fact it could have gone either way!).

And finally, the readings of thoughtful prayers and poems to inspire us and help us think about the meaning of this season. All have been special including the prayer from one of our youngest children thanking God for mince pies and Santa!

The School Vision:

Over the past year we have been working together to really consider what it is we are trying to achieve as a Federation. We have involved, staff, children, Governors and parents in this process and now feel that we have a clear vision for the future of the schools which we would like to share with you:

Our Vision Statement Learning Together for Excellence

We are a family of schools at the heart of our rural communities united by a shared vision to enable every child to learn and thrive in the ever-changing world.

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. We strive to nurture and develop happy, young people with enquiring minds, a spirit of curiosity and creativity, respect for themselves, others and the environment.

Children are at the centre of everything we do. Our schools work together as a team in partnership with parents, our local benefice and the local community to prepare confident and responsible individuals with the knowledge, skills, resilience, and adaptability to flourish now and in their futures.

We are inclusive and welcoming to those of all backgrounds and faiths.

Our family is built upon core Christian Values

These are **Respect, Community, Aspiration, Thankfulness, Compassion and Endurance.**

Throughout the school year, we celebrate our values during collective worship and explore them in all areas of our curriculum. Most importantly, we carry them out in everything we do and they are embedded into the life of the school.

Respect: We respect ourselves and others.

Community: We value our family, schools, communities and the wider world.

Aspiration: We aim high and challenge ourselves and others to achieve excellence.

Endurance: We persevere even when things look hard or tough.

Compassion: We look after each other, share and think about how others feel, showing kindness at all times.

Thankfulness: We are thankful for everything we have and to each other.

We have been talking with the children over the last term about **Respect** and **Community** and what this means to us. A recent Governors visit looking at the Ethos of the schools picked up on how the pupils were proud of their school and were confident to articulate the school values.

In the new year the value will be **Aspiration**, we will explore what this means to us through Acts of Worship and opportunities across the Curriculum. What are our hopes and ambitions for the future?

Staffing News:

Following a recruitment process, we are pleased to announce that Mrs Oakes has been appointed as HLTA to work in our Infant class at West Chinnock. Mrs Oakes has been working in the class for this term and comes with a great deal of experience.

School Development Updates:

Each year we put together a School Development Plan (SDP) that outlines our key development areas for the year. Our main development points are updated below:

1. Reading:

The main phase of improving reading is introducing the teaching of phonics using a recognised programme “Read Write Inc” (RWI).

So far we have engaged in basic staff training, gained support from specialist agencies and purchased new resources. We have another full day of intensive staff training in the new year and are awaiting confirmation of a date from the training agency. As soon as we know we will let you know as this will be an INSET day for the pupils.

All KS1 pupils have been assessed and we will start the formalised teaching and learning of the RWI programme in January 2022.

2. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):

Mrs Jaggard the SENDCO has been working with specific SEND pupils across the schools to ensure that they have the best support.

Following a SEND Governors monitoring visit this term it was noted in the feedback that:

“There is an increased focus on supporting children with SEND in class. Pupils enjoy use of varied learning resources, including concrete materials in KS2. Pupils were particularly engaged with learning in KS2. Varied resources are used to support teaching, including interactive whiteboards and recorded programmes.”

Updated SEND information and Policy is now on the website.

www.nortonandwestchinnockschools.co.uk/learning/send.htm

3. Parental Communication:

We hope that by now you will all have had a chance to visit our new Website:

www.nortonandwestchinnockschools.co.uk

We have also added our Curriculum Plans on the website which provide an outline of our long term plans for the curriculum for each year group. These are working documents so may change slightly depending on circumstances, however we hope that the plans will give you an idea of the learning that your children will be engaging in over the coming year.

We have been working closely with the office regarding letters and information and hope that you have seen some improvements with communications out to you.

Our Parent Champion meetings are continuing at both schools and parents are encouraged to talk with the Champions if you would like something discussed in the meeting. If you are interested in being a Parent Champion, please let us know, we are always looking for more to join us.

We have succeeded in running face to face Parent Information Evenings, an Introduction to Phonics with Reception and Year 1 parents. We have been particularly thrilled to run our Christmas festivities with parents attending.

Clubs/events to look forward to next term

We are pleased to continue to offer a variety of clubs at both schools next term. Please see the timetable for clubs at each school being sent out to parents today, with information on how to sign-up. All after school clubs will commence the week beginning 10th January 2022. If a club is oversubscribed, we will endeavour to accommodate as many children as possible. In some instances, this may mean a rotation over the two half-terms, in which case we will notify you at the earliest opportunity.

We remain hopeful that sporting and other events will resume soon in the Spring Term. Keep an eye on our school website which will be updated with dates as soon as they come in.

As we reach the end of 2021, this leaves us to say a big thank you to everyone involved in our community for your support in making our schools places where children can thrive. We would like to wish you all a very peaceful and enjoyable Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you all back to school on **Tuesday 4th January 2022.**



Mr J Caswell & Ms L Stiddard
Co-Headteachers