



Hotspur

Bulletin

Friday 14th September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week 56 of our Y6 children have been at Lockerbie Manor in Scotland. Kevin McVittie, Jackie Davison and I went to visit them on Wednesday and they were having a wonderful time. Although it was raining when they got there on Monday they have been fortunate to have sunny warm weather for most of the week.

Children have been undertaking very adventurous activities and displaying great team work. It was great to see the ways in which they encourage each other. I was particularly impressed with children's willingness to have a go and overcome their fears. There are a couple of photos from Lockerbie in this bulletin with more to follow. Families will be invited into school to see the weeks photos later on this term.



The DfE (Department for Education) has recently warned Headteachers that they should not express 'political views'. The call to suppress views at a time when schools are suffering from funding cuts, the expansion of grammar schools, the challenges of retention of teachers and school leaders and the pressure of standards on pupils, families and staff, seems a little desperate. In the past I have been quietly vocal about the absurdity of the academisation programme pursued by the current government. The gradual drip-drip of horror stories evidencing corruption, fraud, mismanagement and most-shockingly, the failure to impact on the quality of education has become more of a torrent in recent months. This was shown very clearly in the Panorama exposé of the Bright Tribe chain which had been given £1m to establish a Northern Hub locally. Investigations showed that funding for building work was not used for the designated purpose and that there were very high levels of deceit and dishonesty. It has been shown many times over that it is not the ideologically-fuelled change of school structures that leads to improved outcomes for children and young people. Excellent teaching is the key to this and so much of what we have experienced in the last few years has distracted from this. Local,

meaningful accountability would also help schools to avoid some of the calamities we have observed and ensure that funding went where it was intended.



Miles Wallis-Clarke

Headteacher



Events next week

Monday

- 13:30-15:15—Y5 Art Afternoon

Thursday

- Y1 woods visit

Friday

- 08:45-10:00—Family Coffee Morning

Golden Children This Week



Hotspur Facebook Page



The Hotspur Facebook page is updated quite often with events in school. We realise that not everybody uses Facebook but it is very easy to upload information to it compared to the school website. Please 'Like' the page if you would like to receive the updates. Remember that comments are widely read and that there are better ways of communicating specific enquiries with the school or individual members of staff.

Y5/6 Performance - Change of date

Thanks to an eagle-eyed parent, who compared a Heaton Manor diary with our Key Dates sheet, it was discovered that the Y6 transition evening clashes with the date we had set aside for the Y5/6 performance. The performance will now be one day earlier on Wednesday 26th June.

Great North Run

This morning we celebrated children, families and staff that had taken part in the Great North Run activities over the weekend. Well done to all of them!



New Ensembles

For any children wanting to play an instrument with others, Music Partnership North are starting four Ensembles which are free to join. Sessions include Brass, Wind and the Ukelele. Please see the school office for more information.



Teacher Training Placements

As you may know, we work in partnership with Northumbria University to develop student teachers. In fact, over half of our current teaching staff trained here as part of their initial teacher training. We firmly believe the needs of the children come before the requirements of any placement we host and typically, student placements are overwhelmingly positive for the children as they benefit from having additional expertise and support during lessons. One of the training routes we offer is called School Direct. This places a larger emphasis on in-school training and requires a placement for the best part of the school year.



This year Bethany Condliffe will be training alongside Carol Jackson in 3Y. She has gained lots of prior experience as a teaching assistant. Bethany enjoys a challenge and is a keen hiker in her free time.

David Mansfield will be placed with Katherine Hill in 5Y. He has experience of delivering sessions of PE within schools and as a Summer Camp leader. David enjoys all sports with a particular enthusiasm for cricket.

