



West Tyne Federation of Schools

Henshaw CE Primary School, Bardon Mill,
Hexham, Northumberland, NE47 7EP
Mrs Judith Meek - Acting Head Teacher
Telephone: (01434) 344324
email: admin@henshaw.northumberland.sch.uk



30th November, 2016

Dear Parents

The Governing Body has published a five-year Strategic Plan (available in the 'Governors' section of the schools' websites) to bring about its vision of vibrant and sustainable schools with a distinctive Christian ethos that provide the very best possible education for our children.

The main steps in implementing the Strategic Plan are as follows:

1. Improving Teaching and Learning

With the experience and guidance of acting executive head Judith Meek, head of schools Susan Atkinson and Sarah Hutchinson, and with the strong support of the teaching staff, significant developments have been made in all areas of learning across the Federation.

The foundation has been laid for an environment that encourages our children to develop an enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning.

We take this opportunity to thank the staff for the enormous amount of work they have put into bringing these positive changes to fruition.

2. Staffing Review and Re-structure

Our schools must become sustainable for the years to come, particularly in the changing financial and political landscape of Education, and it is in this light that we are undertaking a review and re-structure which may result in a reduction in staffing across the Federation schools.

We apologise that due to our duty of confidentiality, we were unable to communicate this to you as parents before now although due to a mistake some became aware of the position before we were able to formally notify you.

A document appeared in error in the 'News' section of Henshaw's website; this document is a legally-required 'Equality Impact Assessment' and referred to a possible reduction in staff numbers. Whilst a separate Equality Impact Assessment is required for each school, this refers to the reduction in numbers across the Federation as a whole. We should not have published this document without a full explanation of its purpose, and we apologise to you as parents and to our staff for any concern or distress this has caused.

A fair and transparent process must be followed where staff numbers may need to be reduced, and it is important as part of that process to ensure complete confidentiality for any individuals who are – or might be – affected until they have been made fully aware of the situation. Those steps have now been carried out so that we are able to update you.

The process involved in the staffing review and re-structure is very sensitive and strictly controlled by agreements between the Local Authority (who support the Governing Body as the employer), and

unions who represent the staff. As a consequence, we are limited in what we can say while the process continues.

What we can say at present is that staff have been fully aware of the review for several weeks, and that a proposal relating to the whole Federation has been provided to them. Staff are currently being consulted on that proposal and have the opportunity to submit comments on it.

The process will be completed by the end of January 2017 when we will provide parents with specific details of the changes to the staffing and structure, and invite you to a meeting to discuss them and to answer your queries.

3. Appointment of a New Executive Head Teacher

The final and exciting step in looking to the future of our Federation is the appointment of a permanent executive head teacher.

The role is currently being advertised and we expect to interview candidates in the New Year with the successful candidate taking up their role in the Summer term.

We very much hope that the new head will cement and build upon the excellent work that has been done across the Federation so far and look forward to seeing what the future holds for our schools.

With that in mind, if you can think of good candidates for this exciting role, please encourage them to apply.

4. New Governing Body

The Governing Body has seen the addition of new, enthusiastic governors joining us with a huge range of skills. We are delighted that several people have volunteered to fill vacancies and we are grateful to all those who dedicate a great deal of their time to serve as governors.

The Governing Body is now extremely well placed to help drive forward our ambition for our schools and for the children in their care.

Recognising that to achieve the very best for our Federation, Governors, staff and parents must work together, we would very much like to build upon our excellent relationships and particularly to introduce the new governors to you.

We therefore invite you to meet with the Governors on Thursday, 2nd February at 3.30pm at Greenhead, or at 6pm at Henshaw. By this time we will be able to share with you our plans and ambitions for the continued flourishing of the West Tyne Federation of Schools.

Yours,



Pippa Milburn
Chair of Governors