



Governing Body

Winter Newsletter – December 2020

What a year! It is hard to put into words the appreciation we have for all our teachers and support staff, our fantastic community of children and parents for making this year what it has been.

An unprecedented set of challenges have been faced. Our staff team have put everything they had into making our remote learning work, acquiring many a new skill in the process!

Our attendance has been really strong given the circumstances and participation both in school and remotely has been truly excellent. The COVID changes to the school timetable have had a positive impact! We have seen further improvements in behaviour due to the continuous presence of their class teachers without having covering teachers coming in and out to cover teacher prep time (which is now concentrated on Friday afternoons) and maintaining the same amount of teaching hours means that learning has not been impacted as part of this.

All of this, in addition to non-school issues, has of course been challenging for our parent community also. Thank you for supporting the continued decision to maintain the current school hours and teaching structure during this COVID period and your engagement in your child's learning at home whilst needing to work or look after other dependents. We do not underestimate how difficult this has been at times.

So thank you to our whole school community for what we have achieved in 2020.

Update on our School Development Plan

To support the senior leadership of the school, we have Link Governor relationships in place which are aligned to specific areas of the School Development Plan. Through these relationships we discuss how we are meeting the milestones we have set and share and challenge ideas on how best to achieve these.

Some of the things you can look forward to seeing as the school year progresses;

Behaviours, Attitudes and Personal Development

- Some of our older children making videos to illustrate and role model outstanding attitudes and behaviours
- Redevelopment of the lower playground to support enhancement in behaviours
- Further work with our partner Primary Futures on career aspirations

Quality of Education

- Continuation of all the benefits of Magic Monday! Our children are gaining so much in terms of creativity and teamwork in addition to embedding the themes of more structured learning and their projects get better and better each time. Brilliant, fun learning!
- The introduction of Learning By Questions – a great new way of digital learning which will enable us to give immediate feedback to children as they answer questions rather than



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waiting for marking. It also complements the White Rose Maths scheme recently introduced which has gone down a storm and is proving to be very effective.

Leadership & Management

- We welcome the addition of Mrs Birtwistle to the leadership team as Assistant Head Teacher – we can't wait to see more of what she will bring to the table in terms of school direction over 2021, having instigated the review which brought us White Rose Maths.
- Expect to see more visible signs through the school and website of both our **FOREST** values and activities that link to our wider vision for the school over the next three to five years – **'Your Inspirational Community'**. Creating aspiration and widening the horizons of all our children through their learning and life experiences both inside and outside of the school is our primary driver and we continue to welcome suggestions around this theme from our whole school community.

Going into the Spring Term

We all hope to see a return to normality as soon as possible but please be rest assured that the whole staff team at Steeton have the wellbeing of your children at the very heart of what they do in addition to their learning outcomes. They have demonstrated, with your support and the engagement of our fantastic children, that we can get through this as a community and ensure that everyone gets the support they need and we as a governing body have no doubt that this will continue as long as it needs to do so.

We hope you have all enjoyed the enthusiastic renditions of Christmas hits around the Forest School fire as a substitute for the usual plays and concerts.

We hope all our families and staff have a wonderful festive season and look forward to bringing you another update in the Spring.