



The Nelson Thomlinson School
Wigton
Cumbria
CA7 9PX
...still "outstanding"
(Ofsted, May 2013)

Headmaster:
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Dear Parents,

Parental comments on Reports and Reviews

With well over 2000 parents to liaise with, you will appreciate that two-way communication between home and school is not always straightforward. You can, of course, continue to use the usual channels (post, e-mail and telephone) for everyday matters, but I am also very keen to encourage you to communicate with pastoral staff, my deputies and me via the *comment box at the bottom of every progress review and full report*.

Many of you do this already and I can assure you that what you write is given our full attention. In those instances where you require a response, we will endeavour to get back to you within 24 hours. Equally, we are very grateful for positive feedback and an indication of your support for the education of your child.

Many of you are also clearly doing your utmost to apply pressure or give praise at home where appropriate and this is much appreciated.

Options and Information Evenings for Year 9 and Year 11

With significant changes being imposed on schools with regards to the qualifications available, and the nature of assessment within those qualifications, parents are warmly invited to two information evenings. They will help you assist your children in making the right choices for the next stage of their education.

The Sixth-Form information evening is important for those pupils who are considering staying on to the Sixth Form, especially those who may not be sure which direction to take in their studies beyond the end of Year 11. The NTS Sixth Form may well provide a better option in the long term for those who are considering an apprenticeship, other Sixth-Form providers, or college courses, and who are likely to get mostly grade C passes in their GCSEs. For those students expecting to achieve grades B or better, the Sixth Form may well be the best option to give students access to Higher Apprenticeships or University courses at the end of Year 13.

Year 9 Options Evening

Tuesday 10th February at 7.00pm in the Main Hall

Sixth-Form information Evening (for pupils currently in Year 11)

Tuesday 3rd March at 7.00pm in the Main Hall

Year 11 Support lessons

You will be aware that one of our mantras is 'going the extra mile', and once again, many staff are making themselves available at lunchtimes and selected after-school times to put on a range of extra lessons designed to help students with matters such as revising topics and achieving readiness for the summer examination, or to provide support to improve outcomes on coursework and controlled assessments. Many pupils will already have been invited to attend such sessions, and I urge you to encourage your child to attend wherever possible. To assist you in guiding your child through the next few weeks, I have included a timetable of what is currently available. Beyond half term, and in the run-up to Easter, subjects not included at present will invite pupils who may be vulnerable to not achieving their target grades to attend sessions as necessary. Lunchtime sessions



usually begin at 12.30pm and run until 1.00pm. After-school sessions usually begin at 3.30pm and end at 4.30pm. Some may run until 5.00pm. Please be aware that pupils attending after-school sessions are expected to make their own transport arrangements for getting home.

Year 11 support lesson timetable:

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
12.30	3.30	12.30	3.30	12.30	3.30	12.30	3.30	12.30	3.30
Textiles	ICT (GYB)	Food (LJ)	Child-care/ Food (PJC)	Econ.	Textiles	Food (LJ)	History (Priority 1)	Food (LJ)	Ind. Tech (DRF)
ICT	Music	Food (JOR)	Textiles	Food (LJ)	ICT (AHJ)	ICT	English	Food (JOR)	
English		Childcare (PJC)	MFL (CH)	Textiles	MFL (DJ)	History (Priority 2)		Textiles	
Business		ICT		ICT	Ind. Tech (IL)			ICT	
		Geog		Ind. Tech (IL)				PE	
		Business							

Reading

As stated in previous letters, the development of pupil reading skills is a key priority at the school. Indicators show that the more pupils engage with reading (i.e. the more books they read), the better they develop their reading skills. Pupils who do not read at home tend to stagnate, or even go backwards, in their reading development. Another alarming, but not unsurprising, finding is that our girls are reading and therefore developing their reading skills at a much better rate than our boys. Whilst the school treats this as a priority, we also ask that you engage with your children on the matter of reading. In an age of gaming, tablets and social media, it is essential to ensure that our pupils continue to engage meaningfully with extended text at both school and home.

We have invested in the Accelerated Reader scheme to incentivise and monitor the progress of Year 7s with their reading. This programme ensures that pupils select books at a level which will develop their reading skills most effectively.

E-Safety

With Internet Safety Day coming up on 10th March we have been focussing on the issue of e-safety across the school in the last few weeks. All pupils have had assemblies on e-safety as well as the opportunity to meet our external consultant and discuss how they can make themselves safe on the internet. Year 10 and 11 pupils watched a Channel 4 ‘Cyber Bully’ drama as part of their PSHE programme of lessons and a parental e-safety session will take place on Wednesday 11th February in the main hall. Educating our staff, pupils and parents about e-safety will continue to be a school priority.

Staffing changes

At the end of this half term we will be saying goodbye to Mr Quinn in the English Department and welcoming back Mrs Clifford following her maternity leave.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs Cole-Priddle as 2nd in English and Mrs Martindale as a temporary 3rd in English. We have also appointed Mr Schultz as a Learning Mentor.

Reminder: School closure in bad weather

If the weather deteriorates in the next few months to the extent where we are forced to close the school, please note that you will be informed as soon as is practicable via the school website and Radio Cumbria. I should reiterate here that we will endeavour to keep the school open whenever possible and will only resort to closing it in extreme circumstances. *Facebook* is not a reliable source of information in situations like these.

Boccia competition success

In the Regional Finals that took place at Greenbank Sports Academy, Liverpool, our team of 3 pupils (Ella Cooper-Holmes, Liam Edgar and Abigail O'Regan) did brilliantly to get through the heats and then played superbly to win the 3rd place play-off 9-0. Pupils received a medal each. I am very grateful to Mr Richardson & Mrs Wills for accompanying them.

Scarlet Fever information

Please find attached information we have received via the County on Scarlet Fever that we have been asked to pass on to you.

As ever, I would urge parents to contact the school if they feel that we can improve the service we provide in any way.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Northwood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Mr DS Northwood
Headmaster