

THE NELSON THOMLINSON SCHOOL



Founded 1714

Headmistress
Mrs J Downes B.Sc.

WIGTON, CUMBRIA, CA7 9PX
Tel: (016973) 42160 Fax: (016973) 49160
Email: admin@nts.cumbria.sch.uk
www.nts.cumbria.sch.uk

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Dear Parents

This year we have decided to introduce an **attitude to learning** grade for every student in the school. These grades will be reported to students and parents at regular intervals and will also be incorporated into the twice yearly reports. This means that there will no longer be an effort grade on the report but an attitude to learning grade instead.

The students have known about the new grades for several weeks now and have all been issued with the criteria for each grade. These have been introduced to help our students become better learners. We firmly believe that having the right attitude to learning will result in improvements in attainment for students of all ages and abilities.

There is a 5 point scale, with 5 being the highest. I must stress that these **must not** be compared with the old effort grades. For example, a 5 on the new scale and the old grade A cannot be compared as they are not measuring the same thing. It is quite possible that a student who has previously collected a large number of A grades for effort may now gain a mixture of grades 3, 4 and 5 initially. We hope that by checking on attitude to learning regularly we can help our students to become 'complete learners' and, of course, intervene quickly if problems arise.

The first of the attitude to learning reports will be issued on Friday 22nd October. Students will be bringing home a 'paper' report in an envelope. There is no need to return this report to the school because we hold an electronic copy and it will be incorporated into the formal report book for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and the Lower Sixth. Eventually, all formal reports and attitude to learning reports will be available for parents to access electronically but this facility will not be available until later this term. (We are waiting for an upgrade to our system to make this possible.)

At the start of the term we asked you to complete our annual questionnaire, which appeared in the more usual format this year. We had 933 parental responses covering the current Years 8-13 and I would like to thank you for taking the time to provide us with feedback, something we take very seriously. I have included a summary of the results of the questionnaire on the reverse of this page. The areas where we have dropped below 95% in the final column will be given specific consideration this year.

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After half-term our revamped website will be available. It includes additional features and should be more user-friendly. The web-site will include the typical lunchtime menus with prices and we hope that both parents and students will find this useful when considering 'healthy options' and for budgeting purposes.

Finally, as winter approaches, I would like to remind you about the arrangements in the case of severe weather problems. If we do not intend to open the school we will use the media (Radio Cumbria) and our web-site to make announcements. If, for any reason we have to close the school during the day, we will supervise students at school if they are not able to go home until such time as they can be collected. I must add though that we will only close the school as a very last resort and despite the difficult weather last winter we only lost one school day and that was at the time of the November floods.

Yours sincerely

Janet Downes

J Downes
Headmistress

Cont

Results of Parental Questionnaire 2010

No.	Question	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree and tend to agree
1.	I think NTS is an excellent school	54.9	43.7	1.2	0.2	98.6
2.	My child enjoyed their last year at school	44.9	50.7	3.7	0.7	95.6
3.	The quality of teaching is excellent at NTS	38.1	59.6	2.3	0.0	97.7
4.	Communication between school and parents has improved this year.	18.8	67.5	12.5	1.2	86.3
5.	The amount of homework set for my child is about right.	21.7	66.2	10.7	1.5	87.9
6.	My child's work is adequately marked.	23.2	64.4	11.0	1.5	87.6
7.	My child feels safe at school.	50.9	46.7	1.9	0.6	97.6
8.	If there was a problem I would feel comfortable in approaching the school to get matters sorted out.	53.4	42.5	3.4	0.7	95.9
9.	There is a wide range of activities for my child to take part in at lunchtimes and after school.	48.3	47.1	4.4	0.2	95.4
10.	The twice yearly school reports provide useful information about my child's progress.	61.6	37.0	1.4	0.0	98.6
11.	I find Parent's Evening to be a good point of contact with my child's teachers.	53.2	42.8	3.2	0.8	96.0
12.	The school provides a sufficient range of healthy food options at lunchtimes.	22.9	55.3	17.6	4.2	78.2
13.	Having my child as a student at NTS means a lot to me and my family.	44.3	51.4	3.6	0.7	95.7
14.	The school is suitably ambitious for my child.	47.4	49.3	2.9	0.4	96.7

(All numbers are in percentages, rounded to 1 decimal place and therefore may not total to 100.)