



The Nelson Thomlinson School
Wigton
Cumbria
CA7 9PX

...still "outstanding"
(Ofsted, May 2013)

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Headmaster:
Mr DS Northwood, M.A., M.Ed.

May 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I should like to bring a few matters to your attention:

Pupils' names in school reports

Having read and signed off a number of reports recently, I am aware that with some, there is considerable variation in the teachers' spelling of the pupil's first name (e.g. Jonathan, Jonathon, Jon, John, Jonny etc.). Whilst I am keen on the one hand to allow teachers to demonstrate the fact that they know the child personally, I am concerned about the lack of consistency and the potential of offending either the child or you, as parents. Given that these are formal documents, I should like to instruct my colleagues to use the child's given name only, as per the information supplied by you when he/she joined the school. This will be the default position from now on.

If you wish to insist that we use a first name other than that supplied by you when your child joined the school, please could you let my secretary know in writing?

Boys' PE shorts

I am aware that the white shorts worn by boys as part of their PE kit are made of material that is partially transparent. We have done some research in conjunction with the local stores and have identified a different make and one that consists of material that is tougher and more opaque. Although the new shorts cost slightly more than the old ones (£8.50), I think this is a small price to pay for the boys' peace of mind.

From the start of the next academic year (September), we expect all Year 7 boys to be wearing the new-style shorts and they will be on sale in Gladrags.

Boys in Year 8 and above can also buy the new shorts as and when stocks are available but priority will be given to the new Year 7 intake.

Unauthorised absence and holidays taken during the school term

Now that we are entering the examination season, I should like to stress the importance of good attendance. There is evidence that indicates a strong correlation between good attendance and good examination results, ones that will ultimately impact on your child's future job prospects. Holidays taken during term time have just as much impact on a child's performance as absence due to illness, and I will continue to toe the Local Authority line here by not authorising time off in these instances.

Safety on the school driveway

A recent minor accident has prompted us to make the pathway adjacent to the driveway safer for pedestrians. (We propose to move it to the verge.) Inevitably, these things take time to implement and until the new pathway is created, could I ask you to drive with extreme caution on the school site?

Please also remind your child to walk sensibly on the existing pathway and, in particular, to listen out for traffic coming up behind them as they leave school.

Health and safety audit

On the subject of safety, you might be interested to know that we recently had a Health and Safety Inspection conducted by the Local Authority. The inspectors were very pleased with what they saw and gave the school a score of 96%, the best result we have ever had. I am extremely grateful to Mrs Hoskins and Mr Beechey for all their hard work on this front.

Year 7, 8 and 9 school examinations

Now that the examination season for GCSEs and AS/A Levels is well and truly upon us, I should like to encourage our younger pupils to prepare as best they can for their own year group examinations. Whilst we will be advising pupils on what and how to revise, I would urge you, as parents, to remind them of the importance of tests and examinations and that the process in Key Stage 3 is designed to prepare them for what they will face a few years down the line. If you had time to help them revise, testing them on material they need to know, I should also be grateful.

Learning Gateway cancellation

The Learning Gateway will no longer be available from 20th June 2015. This is mainly due to the lack of parental uptake, technical difficulties and spiralling costs. If you require information about your child, please contact the school via the normal channels of communication. We shall, in the future, be investigating more appropriate digital communication systems as and when they become available.

Year 11 and Year 13 Leavers

Last week we said goodbye to our Year 13 students and this Friday will be many of the Year 11 pupils' last day at school. I am reminded of the contribution they have made to the life of NTS and should like to take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts. They have done so much to make us proud and I wish them the very best of luck as they move on to the next stage of their careers.

Kind regards,



Mr DS Northwood
Headmaster