



For Parents and Prospective Parents
Re Class Structure for September 2017

Wednesday 3rd May 2017

Dear parents and prospective parents,

Thank you for your patience as we thoroughly explore a range of options for the future of our schools. This process is complex and it is very challenging in the current educational and financial climate to arrive at a solution which will address the long-term viability of our schools and meet the wishes of all our stakeholders at the same time.

As such, we have yet to arrive at a solution to address the bigger long-term picture. The Local Authority and Diocesan strategic plan for Wensleydale is continually evolving and we are very aware that we are a small part of bigger considerations for the future of small schools across our whole Authority. The future is clearly not entirely in our own hands but we continue to work alongside both the LA and the diocese to plan for the future in such challenging circumstances. As a Governing Board we are doing everything in our power to arrive at a sustainable model for the future within a challenging wider landscape over which we have limited control. A short summary of our work to date:

- Full costing of 12+ potential models alongside colleagues in the Local Authority's finance team
- A request for the LA to explore catchment areas and boundaries
- Regular liaison with the diocese
- Regular liaison with senior officers at the Local authority
- Several extraordinary governing body meetings (single item agenda), in addition to any sub-meetings and working parties
- An update on exploration and discussions at every governing board meeting this year, in addition to the normal full agendas
- An invitation to Rishi Sunak (Richmondshire MP) and Justine Greening (Secretary of State for Education) to become involved with our plight as representative of the wider small school issue

It is likely that we will benefit slightly from the new funding formula (should it ever come into effect), but not sufficiently to address the current projected deficit. More on this to follow at a later date. In the meantime, we need to make (interim) plans for our class structure from September.

We are pleased to inform parents and prospective parents that we will be maintaining the current class structures at all three schools for a further year (from September 2017), assuming no other unforeseen changes (e.g. pupil numbers / staff). That is:

- Class 1 at Bainbridge = Nursery and YR (Bainbridge and Askrigg pupils)
- Class 2 at Bainbridge = Y1 and Y2 (Bainbridge and Askrigg pupils)
- Class 3 at Askrigg = Y3 and Y4 (Bainbridge and Askrigg pupils)
- Class 4 at Askrigg = Y5 and Y6 (Bainbridge and Askrigg pupils)
- Class 1 at West Burton = EYFS and KS1 (West Burton pupils)
- Class 2 at West Burton = KS2 (West Burton pupils)

Further details regarding each class's staffing provision will be provided later this term with a view to keeping as much stability and consistency as possible for the year ahead. Please can we reassure you that we are doing everything we can to ensure the best possible education for the children in our federation, though we must be totally transparent about the very real vulnerability of all three of our schools in their current form; an understanding that is shared by many schools in a similar position.

We will continue to keep you informed of any further developments as we continue to work with the Local Authority and Diocese. Miss Harper will attend the scheduled parents' forum on 17th May. Please do contact us in the normal way should you have any further questions at this time.

Kind regards,

For and on behalf of the Governing Board:

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