



# Newlands CofE School Federation



Newsletter 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Families

We hope you were able to enjoy the Bank Holiday weekend, but what a shame about the weather! It made us remember the beautifully warm, sunny days we experienced this time last year during Lockdown 1. We closed the Clandon site and just had Shere open for our vulnerable and key worker children. It was a great opportunity to get all our staff from both schools working together and getting to know each other better, as we implemented a rota of staff to cover this time in school. We were able to take advantage of the stunning surroundings and go for plenty of walks, paddling in the stream and seeing the daily progress of the new lambs at the top of the hill. Let's hope it won't be too long before we can get out there together and do that again. It reminds us how lucky we are to have both schools in such beautiful settings.

## Federation

The newly formed Newlands Governing Body (one Governing Body for the Federation) are busy beavering away behind the scenes setting up the necessary committees needed to undertake all the work they do. We thank them for all their hard work, which often goes unnoticed. The purpose of governing bodies is to 'conduct' the school together with the 'leader' of the orchestra, the Headteacher, with a view to promoting high standards of education.

Marsha Walton our Chair of Governors, spoke last week at two virtual meetings for Headteachers and Chairs of Governors from across the Diocese of Guildford. We both attended too and enjoyed hearing her speak to the other participants about the process of taking Shere and Clandon through the federation route over the last 18 months. Marsha writes...

*"We've arrived! We are now, officially, a federation of two schools: separate but together. The process has taken a while but part of the strength of this new collaboration I believe, is that it has been developed over time and is not a 'quick fix' that is likely to falter at the first hurdle.*

*Just to remind everyone, the advantages for our two small schools are:*

- *we can collaborate for a purpose*
- *grow in time without sacrificing the nurturing essence of our small schools*
- *where governance is strategic but not remote*
- *where we can, and are, making much better use of our small budgets*
- *where staff and school leaders thrive and outcomes for pupils improve and*
- *where, in small church schools, ever since the beginnings of national education, young pupils better identify school learning with their everyday life.*

*Our first steps will focus on consolidating what's best about our two schools. We will respect the history of each school as we gradually implement any beneficial changes, we agree with the Headteacher. We will plan carefully with her for the future and intend to*

*build a strong, seamless, and resilient structure – so another progressive journey – towards excellence in all aspects of our work.*

*Expect to hear more of a loving and caring community, highly skilled staff, a broad, creative curriculum with the child at its centre, forest school and other inspirational places to learn. Expect to hear more from Vicky soon!”*

## Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Consultation

You will by now have received a communication about the changes to the curriculum for RSE. Please email any comments or questions to your school office by noon on Monday 17th May. A forum will be held by Zoom at 15:30 on Thursday 20th May to respond to the questions. Please let your school office know if you intend to attend so you can be sent the Zoom link.

## NCPCC Number Day

It was so great to see Number Day happening across both the schools last Friday. We were delighted to witness so many creative ways of wearing numbers! Maths featured for most of the day from our youngest children in Nursery to our oldest in Year 6. It was very evident to see the progression of learning within these ages and stages and the clear way in which maths teaching evolves throughout. Very evident across both schools and all year groups, is the way in which practical maths is the first port of call, enabling the children to fully grasp the basic principles and vital in moving them forward. Many thanks to all the staff in helping to make such a practical and fun day. Also huge thanks to you for your donations which will be so gratefully received by the NCPCC to continue their good work in supporting all children.



## Celebration Assemblies

Each week we set aside an assembly (currently held outside at both schools!) to celebrate our 'Stars of the Week' and 'Citizens of the Week'. The current focus for citizens is friendship and collaboration. It is such an important part of our week and the children really look forward to the assembly. As I (Mrs Webb) returned to Clandon on Friday morning after being at Shere, I was enthusiastically approached by children asking, "Are you doing Celebration assembly this afternoon?" When the reply was "Yes", it was greeted with a "Yeah!"

It is quite touching to see the children responding so positively to their classmates receiving a certificate and debating who it is that is being described for their great work efforts or perseverance, or who has been so kind and caring during the week. Staff remind the children that even if they didn't get a certificate that week, we are always looking out for kind acts and extra effort in class. Some weeks we find it really hard to decide on an individual, so much so that a whole class might be rewarded!

## Attendance

Last week we met with our schools' attendance officer for the half-termly attendance review for both schools. It brought into focus the importance of children being in school every day. Each new day provides new learning experiences. Arriving late to school can also have a detrimental effect. It limits these diverse experiences as teachers have early learning tasks ready for when children arrive. Coming in on time allows children to settle

in properly, getting themselves ready for the day ahead. We know you will support us in ensuring your child/children are in school whenever they can be and arrive on time.

This is a timely opportunity to remind you that if your child cannot attend school for whatever reason that you inform your school office promptly. Thank you.

Have a really lovely weekend.

Best wishes

Emma Toone and Yvette Webb