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Dear Parents,

Thursday 22nd October 2015

Federation Newsletter – October Edition

Welcome to the second edition of the monthly federation newsletter and I feel sure you will agree that it has been a very busy time in both of our schools! Having said this, we have now come to the end of the first autumn term and I hope that both you and your children are looking forward to the short holidays. I dare say you will all be busy and I am sure that some of the staff will also be working in school at some point over the next few days.

Open Days

It was my pleasure to host an open morning at Lutton St. Nicholas and an open afternoon at Gedney Church End on Thursday 21st October. We were very happy to welcome new parents at both schools and I was heartened by all of the positive comments that we received. Open days are important because the process of applying for a primary school place in September 2016 is about to commence. If you know of any families who are looking for a place for next year, I would be most grateful if you could point them in our direction. They will need to be four years of age between September 1st 2016 and August 31st 2017 to be eligible. The window for applications opens on November 16th and hopefully both of our schools will be favoured by parents once again.

Breakfast Provision

I am very pleased to report that Breakfast Provision continues to be a success at both schools and I am indebted to Mrs. Oldfield and Mrs. Mascall for their work in this area. As you will know, school provides all of the resources for breakfast but if any of you would like to make a donation of bread, butter, cereals, fruit juices, fruit or other breakfast-related produce, we would be most grateful to receive them. Contributions of this kind help to reduce the costs and this gives us a better opportunity for sustainability. As always, your help and support is very sincerely appreciated by children and staff alike.

Halloween

Thank you for sending your children into school today in their Halloween costumes. As always, our children looked amazing and the imagination and creativity you all bring to dress-down days is never less than really impressive! I would also like to thank the respective School Councils, FOGS and FOLS for their work and support in this area. Finally, your child will be bringing home a reminder letter about the Halloween Disco that is being hosted at Lutton St. Nicholas Primary School this evening from 6.30-8.00. All of the children in our federation are very warmly invited to this exciting event with an admission charge of just £1.50 per pupil. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Residential Update

As many of you will be aware, we have been working hard in school to ensure that residential provision remains available to all of the children in Lincolnshire. This has been called into question because of the Local Authority's decision to close the Freiston Centre for Environmental Education, effective from 31st August 2015. We are still hopeful that the consortium of schools we have put together will be able to reopen the centre in January 2016 but some contingency planning has also been undertaken to ensure that our Year 6 children still gain access to high quality residential learning.

With this in mind, I have used some of my contacts in Northamptonshire to arrange an annual residential to the Longtown Outdoor Education Centre in Herefordshire. My intention going forward, will be for Year 4 pupils to enjoy a residential experience in March at Freiston or another centre that is nearby. To build on this, Year 6 pupils will maintain their affiliation to Longtown and this will become our base henceforth.

If any of you are interested in finding out more about Longtown, please access the following link:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/outdoorlearning/centres/Longtown/Pages/default.aspx>

British Values

Recently, there has been much coverage in the press about what have become known as Unique British Values. This is part of the government's strategy to promote tolerance, integration and an overall sense of belonging. The 4 core values they are wishing schools to promote are as follows:

1. Democracy
2. The rule of law
3. Individual liberty
4. Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

As a federation, we share the government's aspiration to promote a tolerant and outward looking society where all people feel valued and included. It is with this in mind that we will be looking at the ways in which these 4 core values can be further promoted within the curriculum and in some of the structures and systems that we use for school organisation. I do recognise that there are also some very sensitive issues in these areas and if any of you would like to talk to me about this important national strategy, please feel free to come and see me. Thank you.

School Uniform

Standards of presentation and dress across our federation have always been very high and I would like to thank you all for the efforts you go to in this important area. School uniform is available through both of the school offices and please remember that if your child is entitled Pupil Premium Grant (PPG), it is free. Thank you once again.

And Finally

Our schools close today to pupils for the half-term holidays, reopening on **Monday 2nd November** at the normal times. On behalf of the children, governors and staff, I would like to wish you all a restful and enjoyable time.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. L. Whitney - Head Teacher

Gedney Church End and Lutton St. Nicholas Federated Primary Schools