



# LEVENS CE SCHOOL

Loving to Learn, Growing Together, Caring for All

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Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

This month's newsletter starts with huge congratulations to running club for their success at the Dallam Cross Country event last week. For some, it was their first time running competitively and everyone rose to the challenge with bags of resilience, determination and enthusiasm. Other local, much larger, schools couldn't keep up with the best of Levens and we ran away with more medals than ever! Special mentions go to Charlotte who came first in her age group, leading the field by miles; to Grace and Rona who also came first and second respectively in their age groups; and to Isla who came first in her race. Jake narrowly missed first place due to an elbow nudge, but came in with a confident silver medal and won School's exemplary conduct award too! Huge thanks to all the parents and family members who came along to cheer our incredible team; and also to Mrs Coker and Mrs Mason who get the majority of our junior children out running every Friday afternoon and prepared to compete at the highest level at events like this. Bring on the county championships and Elleray in the new year – the preparations are already underway!



Thank you for all your support for Children in Need this year! We raised an incredible £305 through our raffle, spotty clothes and cake sales. Hopefully, you will have seen and read the letter that was distributed earlier this week about our Christmas campaign for our link to the school and orphanage in Uganda, Blessed Hill.

### **Poppy Appeal:**

Thank you so much for supporting our poppy appeal this year. We marked

Remembrance both in school and at the memorial on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November and our collection box raised £43.11 for the British Legion.



### **Communication from School:**

We are really grateful to you if you are taking the time to read this newsletter. Often, very important information to parents and carers is shared this way but it has come to our attention recently that parents are missing vital pieces of information because they are not reading newsletters. We are very mindful of the amount of communication that comes out from school so we provide an update only once a month to try to avoid information overload.

### **Christmas Fair:**

Don't forget to come along to our Christmas Fair this Friday from 5.30pm. Please send in your contributions for the fair this week – FOLS are requesting bottles, small games, sweets, small treats for the children's tombola, cakes and chocolate in return for a non-uniform day on Friday. Thanks for your anticipated support which this year focuses on our Year six leavers treat, our outdoor adventure days in the summer term and the purchase of a mobile cooking station to support curriculum food technology.

### **Understanding and support our children's mental health:**

In the last couple of years, we have seen an increase in the number of children and families in school who find every aspect of life more difficult. Anxiety, overwhelm, relationship conflict, attachment difficulties and trauma are currently present in our school. They are displayed in the ways in which our children behave, both at home and in school; and in the ways in which they respond to one another and engage in their learning. We are talking to all our children more and more about understanding their own mental health; about how to consider and show compassion for others who really struggle to regulate in school; and providing individual or small group work for some children who require therapeutic interventions from ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) Mrs Court. Our recent SPACE programme (Supporting Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions) for parents and children has received very positive feedback; and I have now referred to Relax Kids and the Rainbow Wishes Foundation to enable more children in school to benefit from some of these fantastic experiences within the school day. Meanwhile, there are many other ways that we try to nurture positive mindsets and support good mental health on a day to day basis for all our pupils, including our Feel Good Fridays.

### **Staff Wellbeing:**

Following a recent survey on staff wellbeing, leaders are introducing staff wellbeing weeks through each academic year to try to alleviate some of the staff team's work load and additional pressures beyond the classroom. The first one will take place next week, starting on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December. There will be no impact on teaching and learning or any compromise on the health, safety and welfare of our pupils, however, there are some changes next week that you need to be aware of. There will be no after-school clubs run by school staff so no choir on Monday and no running club on Friday. Rather than reimburse payments, these will be credited into next term. Basketball, YoYo and Art club will run as normal.

Class email accounts will not be monitored during this week so urgent messages need to go via the office, unless the message is around welfare or safeguarding, in which case please email me directly or call the school office. The monitoring of class accounts will resume from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December for all classes.

Parents and family members can also really help support and care for our staff team's wellbeing by considering carefully when and how you correspond with staff via emails. Please do not email staff in the evening or at the weekends, but instead schedule your email to arrive during weekdays. Thank you for the care and support you show all our staff who work tirelessly everyday to do the best for all our children.

### **Site Security:**

A reminder please to all parents that even if you know the person who is waiting to gain entry at the green gate, you should never hold the gate open for someone as you leave. All visitors should please wait at the gate until your call is answered and politely refuse an offer of entry onto the playground by any adult other than school staff. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our site secure.

**Attendance and Punctuality:**

Whilst absence from school, other than for illness is rarely authorised, we would always encourage parents to request leave of absence using the appropriate form published on our website. Receiving an unauthorised absence for one or two days is preferable to children feeling uncomfortable when talking to adults about the reasons for their absence from school.

Today, a total of 11 pupils arrived late for school and have received a late mark on their attendance record. Please ensure your child arrives promptly for school in order to be in their classroom when the register is taken and their lunch ordered (if applicable) at 8.45am.

**Patterdale Payments:**

Thank you for your payments so far; the next instalment of £50 is due on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

**Parent Governor Vacancies:**

A reminder that we have two parent governor vacancies on our Board of Governors and the closing date for nominations is 4<sup>th</sup> December. Meetings are usually held on a Thursday evening and a term of office is three years. If you would like any additional information, Mrs Coker, our Clerk, would be very pleased to hear from you and to respond to any questions that you may have about the role.

Please ensure you regularly check our school website calendar as this is constantly being updated! There is a lot going on in the lead up to Christmas and we would not want parents or family members to rely on text messages only. Just follow this link - <https://www.levens.cumbria.sch.uk/calendar/>

Wishing you all a lovely start to the festive season,

With my very best wishes



Jane Farraday