



LEVENS CE SCHOOL

Loving to Learn, Growing Together, Caring for All

Headteacher: Mrs Jane Farraday

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Monday 2nd September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the start of the new school year; and a very special welcome to all our new families starting at Levens. I hope you have enjoyed a happy, healthy summer holiday and some special time with friends and family.

For those new to school in Nursery and Reception, please do take time to refresh yourselves with our routines and processes via our website and please get in touch if you have any remaining queries.

Staff are attending training today and tomorrow, ahead of school re-opening on Wednesday at 8.35am, so please check our website first to see if you can find the information you require. Should you have a specific question or request, we will endeavour to respond to you as soon as possible.

If you haven't already, please book your child's place at YoYo too, by emailing the school office team to avoid disappointment. Some of the sessions are close to capacity and places on the day cannot be guaranteed. Hopefully all updates and changes to school meals, if relevant, have now been advised. Children from Reception to Year 2 will continue to receive a government supported free infant school meal this year.

Class teachers are very busy updating the class pages on the school website, writing their autumn newsletters etc. These will be ready very soon and will include important information regarding curriculum content for this term; expectations around reading at home and homework; specific class arrangements; PE days and required kit etc. Please look out for these as staff have spent a considerable amount of time ensuring you and your child have all the relevant information you need for a positive start to the new year!

We hope that the children are excited about returning or starting their Levens' journey, but we also know that the start of a new school year can be an anxious time for all of us! As always, our priority is to ensure that everyone feels safe, happy and respected in our school. Please be reassured that we will be starting the term with a commitment to ensuring everyone settles back into school routines as smoothly as possible.

On Friday 13th September, we would like to invite all our parents, carers and wider family members to attend our drop-in from 3pm when you will be able to visit your child's/children's classrooms and talk to staff. Everyone is welcome.

FOLS are also hosting another 'Welcome Breakfast' for all parents and carers of pupils who attend Class 1. This will take place in our dining hall on the morning of Friday 20th September from 8.45am. If your child attends Nursery or Reception, then please come along to meet fellow parents and members of FOLS!

Arriving at School:

Please enter school via either gate onto our playground. We have plenty of space to store scooters and bicycles, but children should dismount before entering our site. Please arrive

no earlier than 8.30am; staff will be out to greet the children from 8.35am each morning as usual.

Arriving promptly really helps your child settle positively into their day, so please arrive early so that children have time to remove coats and store bookbags ready for registration.

Our registration period ends at 8.45am. Children who arrive in to their classroom after this time will receive a late mark in the register and will need to report to the office at the main entrance. Please accompany your child onto site if you are late to ensure your child has arrived in our school grounds safely and to inform office staff of the reason for a late arrival.

At the end of the day, your child will be brought out onto the playground by their class teacher or a teaching assistant at 3.15pm. Nursery pupils who attend an all-day session will be brought to the green gate to meet their parents/carers at 3pm by a member of the Class 1 team. This is the best time to catch up with staff with any questions or information you need to share – class teachers are not usually able to talk to parents in the mornings.

As part of our commitment to ensuring our children are safe as they travel to and from school, only pupils in year 6 are permitted to arrive and leave school unaccompanied.

Expectations on Uniform:

Pupils from Reception through to year 6 are expected to wear grey or black shorts, skirts or trousers; white or pale blue polo shirts; with a Levens official sweater, cardigan or fleece. Pupils should wear black school shoes or an appropriate ankle-boot with plain socks or tights. Open-toe sandals, trainers, pumps and calf or knee-high boots are not appropriate footwear for school days. All pupils are expected to have a named water bottle and a coat in school every day.

All pupils (with exception of year 6 and for this academic year only) should now own a draw-string PE bag and a book bag, as we do not have space for increasingly large rucksacks that have been coming into school recently. Both can be bought at Coniston Cooperate via the online link on our website. We recommend that you personalise your bags with key rings etc so that they can be identified by children easily.

Apart from pupils in Reception and Nursery who come to school wearing their kit on relevant days, PE kits should be kept in school at all times. This should be a pair of pumps or trainers, plus either the official PE t-shirt or a pale blue or white plain t-shirt; plain black or navy-blue shorts or joggers; and an official PE hoodie. Fashion leggings, football kits etc are not permitted.

Pupils are not allowed to wear jewellery, with the exception of stud earrings, but these must be removed for swimming. Wrist watches are permitted, but these should not be smartwatches or physical fitness watches.

Long hair should be tied up at all times. Make-up, nail polish and large, excessive hair accessories are not appropriate for school.

Most importantly, please ensure everything is named so that lost belongings can be reunited with their owners swiftly.

Healthy Snacks:

A reminder that children in Class 1 and Class 2 are provided with a snack every morning in school and do not need to bring snacks from home. Children in Class 3 and 4 are encouraged to bring in a healthy snack. This may be rice cakes, raisins, bread sticks or

items/pieces of fruit. Please do not send your child into school with crisps, cereal bars, cakes or sweets; and please ensure that your choice of snack is always nut-free.

Reporting absence from school:

If your child is ill and not attending school, please contact the school office directly by emailing the office team on office@levens.cumbria.sch.uk no later than 9am on the first day of absence. The school office does not open until 8.30am, so if you try to call instead of emailing before this time, your call may not be answered.

Attendance:

This is a very polite reminder that attendance at school is compulsory and that holidays should not be taken in term time. All requests for holidays will be unauthorised and referred to the Access and Inclusion Team for Attendance at Westmorland and Furness County Council. Following an audit by WAF Council during the summer term, requests for holidays in term time are being closely monitored. If you choose to take your child out of school in term time you may be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent per child. More importantly, your child is likely to miss out on some vital learning – sometimes an entire unit of work.

Our Attendance Policy is currently being updated and will be approved by governors before circulation to all parents and carers. Requests that are exceptional should be made via the absence request form that can be downloaded from the website and must be completed and returned to school at least seven days ahead of the necessary absence.

Lunchtime Supervisor Role:

We are looking to extend our lunchtime supervision team from 11.30 until 12.45pm each day. Lunchtime is so important for our pupils and is such a really rewarding time to be interacting with the children. If you are interested in supporting our school, in an official employee capacity, as a lunchtime supervisor every day or just a few days a week, please do get in touch with the school office team to find out more about this role.

Staff News:

As you are all aware, Mrs Court has been absent from work since the summer term. Her recovery is progressing steadily and we hope to be welcoming her back to school later this term.

Online Payments:

During the summer term of 2023, governors considered moving to an online payment system for parents to use to pay for events such as trips and clubs; but also for paying lunch bills and YoYo fees. As part of our commitment to providing a structure to being able to pay regular, smaller contributions and to reduce administrative burdens in the office, we have decided we should now make a gradual transition to online payments this term. There is an extensive amount of setting up arrangements and data protection considerations for the office team, but we hope to be able to introduce this system for parents soon with an initial roll out, before extending to a virtually cashless payment system by February half term 2025. Please bear with us as we get this underway; more news will be shared very soon via a specific email introducing the scheme and our initial trial.

Term Dates for academic year 2024-5:

Please refer to our school website for all our term dates for this academic year.

Please also note that school terms for subsequent years are often slightly different to those set for WAF Council – we will be confirming dates for 2025-6 on our website very soon.

Nursery Update:

A reminder that for those parents who take payable sessions at Nursery with us, that the sessional rate will increase to £18 from September to remain in line with government funding levels. Parents are asked to check that if they are entitled to 30hrs provision, and that authorisation codes have been applied for or renewed; we are only able to offer free sessions where there is a valid code accessible.

Diary Dates:

Wednesday 4 th September	School reopens for autumn term – Reception-Year 6. Doors open at 8.35am and all pupils should be in their classrooms for registration by 8.45am.
Friday 6 th September	Class 4 Edinburgh Residential – 2 nd Instalment due date
Monday 9 th September	Nursery provision starts from 8.35am Multi-Games Club commences for Class 2 from 3.15-4.15pm
Thursday 12 th September	School Closed for Staff Inset. Westmorland County Show Day 2
Friday 13 th September	School closes at 3pm for Class Drop-Ins for parents and carers.
Wednesday 18 th September	All pupils in Years 4,5 and 6 begin swimming lessons. All pupils require swimming caps during lessons.
Wednesday 18 th September	Reading Information Meeting for parents/carers of Reception children at 4pm.
Thursday 19 th September	Netball Club for Class 3 commences from 3.15-4.15pm
Friday 20 th September	Welcome Breakfast for parents of children in Nursery and Reception at 8.45am in the dining hall, hosted by FOLS.
Monday 23 rd September	Young Voices Club starts with Mrs Haslam and Ms Chapman until 4pm each Monday.
Thursday 26 th September	Harvest Service at St. John's Church at 9.30am
Friday 27 th September	Celebration Assembly for parents and carers in Class 4 from 9am. All welcome.

Please ensure you regularly check our school website calendar as this is constantly being updated! Just follow this link - <https://www.levens.cumbria.sch.uk/calendar/>

Reminder that school is closed on Thursday 12th September for a staff training day offsite. Staff will not be available to respond to emails or talk to parents until Friday 13th September when school re-opens.

Thank you for taking the time to read these important updates.

We very much look forward to welcoming you all this Wednesday from 8.35am.

With my very best wishes



Jane Farraday