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Dear Parents,

Thursday 29th June 2017

Federation Newsletter - June Edition

Welcome to the June edition of the monthly federation newsletter and what a strange time we have been having with the weather. Last week was the warmest since the long, hot summer of 1976 and now, just one week later, it's like being in the middle of autumn! I'm not too good with warm weather, though, so I quite like days like this. Anyhow, enough of this idle talk, let's focus on the children and all of the exciting things they have been doing instead!!

Shiny New Stuff!!

It always makes me happy to bring you news of exciting resources coming into school and since the advent of the new financial year, the staff have been busily working on a number of federation priorities that will directly impact on learning and teaching. The first of these relates to our desire to move towards Apple Schools Status. A couple of years ago, we made an active choice to move away from laptops and desktops, preferring iPads and iPod Touches. Now, we are in a position to add to this with the purchase of 40 new iPads and 20 iPod Touches. These will be distributed around the classrooms at both schools but with the capacity to join them together for whole-class work, as required. The next stage will be to create an interactive Learning Platform that pupils can engage with outside of school, using any wireless enabled device. This will also include the management of information, including the setting and submission of homework. Miss Pattern, as Computing Leader, is currently working hard on this priority so look out for further details in the very near future!

Castles in the Rain

As luck would have it, the wettest day of the year, which happened to be yesterday, rather unhelpfully coincided with the Key Stage 1 trip to Tattershall Castle. At Gedney and Lutton, we are made of stern stuff, however, and the wind and rain certainly did not put them off! The day did get off to rather a late start with the coach attempting to pick us up from Gedney Drove End but it wouldn't be true to say that this has never happened before! Anyhow, I am pleased to report that they all had an amazing time and thoroughly enjoyed learning a little more about our local history and culture. Trips out of school are such an important part of what we do and bringing the curriculum to life will very much help the children to engage with high quality learning beyond the classroom.

New Children for September

This is always a very special time of year as we begin to bring our new children into their Reception classes in preparation for the new school year in September. Numbers are looking good at both schools and it is really exciting to see 11 children coming into Gedney, which is our largest number for quite a few years. In times when small, rural primary schools are coming under pressure because of budgets, it is great to see so many local parents making this choice for their child. Of course the other challenge is for us to ensure that both of our schools reach beyond the immediate communities they serve because this is what helps to ensure that they continue to thrive and flourish. Would you believe that our furthest child travels in from Grantham every day, which is an amazing commitment! Very exciting times indeed.

School Development

In my final weeks as the Executive Head Teacher of the federation, I wanted to put planning in place for some of the more major developments across both school sites. I feel that this will be an exciting prospect for the new leadership team going forward and will also represent something tangible that the staff can work together on as a team. At Gedney, much of the development will relate to the outdoor learning areas, particularly in Class 1. Mrs. Wright has produced a very exciting and ambitious development plan involving artificial grass, an extended canopy, a mezzanine level in the role-play area and some building works that will join the main classroom with the conservatory area. At Lutton, we are very eager to begin replacing some of the classroom furniture, including the tables and chairs, so each of the classrooms have a fresh and corporate feel. Additionally, we are looking at the mobile classrooms (classes 3 and 4) and there might have been a little bit of a breakthrough with the Local Authority, who now recognise that this building is in need of repair and upgrade. Of course my hope in so doing is that it will prove to be economically unviable to do this and consideration can then be given to a funded replacement. In previous newsletters, I have spoken to you about the possibility of a 5th classroom and linking this project to the potential replacement of the existing mobile presents a tantalising prospect. I do feel that the staff at both schools deserve much credit for the way they have managed their financial resources and it makes me happy to see such a long legacy and investment in our buildings as our federation continues to move forward under a new leadership team. Needless to say, I will be keeping in touch from Leicester to see how these plans come together!

FOLS and FOGS Federation Bouncy Fun Day – Friday 7th July

Just a very quick reminder that on **Friday 7th July**, the children from both of our schools will join together at Lutton for the very first Federation Bouncy Fun Day. Lutton children are old-hands at this but for Gedney children, it will be a first. On this day, please could you make sure that your child comes into school with a packed lunch because it will be our intention to see all of the children eating together. If you have ordered a hot school meal for this day, it might be a good idea to cancel this and claim your refund because we are not intending to serve any hot food on this day. I do know how much the children are going to enjoy this federation day and I would again like to thank all of the volunteers from FOLS and FOGS who work so hard on behalf of the children and staff. On this point, if any of you are interested in volunteering, especially at Gedney, please do come and see us. It's a great fun way of getting involved and I can promise that your efforts will be very sincerely appreciated!

Annual Reports

On **Monday 10th July**, we will be publishing your child's annual report which will also contain details of their new class and teacher. I am sure you can appreciate that this is a very busy time for all of the teachers but somehow, they always seem to manage it! I would also like to thank them for ensuring such high quality, personalised reports that really celebrate the essence of what the children bring to our schools. Throughout the week of publication, if you wish to come into school to see either myself or your child's class teacher to discuss the reports, please feel free to do so. I shall look forward to seeing you there!

After-School Clubs

With the exception of guitar, reasoning and chess (all of my clubs), the week beginning **Monday 3rd July** will be the final week for clubs to meet. My clubs will go on for one additional week, which is good news. Can I thank you for allowing your children to attend the rich programme of after-school provision where they have made all made such a tremendous contribution.

And Finally....

If the weather improves, please could you ensure sun-hats are brought into school by your child? I dare say this is wishful thinking but I would like to thank you, nevertheless!

Yours sincerely,

Mr. L. Whitney - Head Teacher

Gedney Church End and Lutton St. Nicholas Federated Primary Schools