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Dear Parents,

Friday 29th April 2016

Federation Newsletter – April Edition

Welcome to the April edition of the monthly federation newsletter and it would have been lovely to have mentioned the amazing weather we have been having of late. Sadly, this is not the case, and if the torrential rain I drove home in last night is anything to go by, there doesn't seem to be much of a change on the horizon. Perhaps the May Day Bank Holiday will herald the sun and an early start to the summer.

SAT's in Year 6

Just a quick paragraph about the SAT's tests that are about to commence with the pupils in Year 6 during the week beginning **Monday 9th May**. As always, they have been working incredibly hard and I know that they will do their best. This year, the government has changed the tests and they are harder than has been the case previously. We also have a new Arithmetic test that very much encapsulates the government's wish to see children being able to independently solve complex problems without the use of a calculator! We do have high hopes for our children but I know that you, as parents, will fully understand the range of new challenges that all schools and children are having to face this year. Finally, on the Friday before the tests, we will write to all parents outlining how they can best prepare their children on the weekend before the actual tests, including details of the now legendary Gedney and Lutton SAT's Breakfasts!!

SAT's in Year 2

In line with my comments above, the government has also made some changes to the SAT's in Year 2 with the introduction of an arithmetic paper and a test for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. These tests are administered in a very low-key manner and the children almost always enjoy celebrating the many, many different aspects of their learning. Interestingly, due to an administrative error, the government has withdrawn the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling paper but we will still go ahead with this because it does provide an objective measure of how well they have done and also helps us to very clearly identify where next they need to go in their learning.

The actual tests will reflect the following timetable:

- Week beginning 16.05.16: Mathematics
- Week beginning 23.05.16: Reading, Grammar/Punctuation/Spelling

Academisation

Over the Easter holidays, I am sure many parents will have heard the government announcing details of the Education White Paper that they are due to publish in May. This will contain many far-reaching changes to the education your child/children receive at pre-school, primary and secondary level. Central to this is the government's desire for all schools to convert to academy status by 2022 with firm planning to be in place by 2020. As small rural schools, it might be easy

to assume that Gedney and Lutton will not be affected by this very important change but, if the White Paper goes through, academisation will become a statutory requirement. At present, we cannot plan for this process because we are unaware of the details but when the White Paper passes into law, I will work closely with the Governing Body to ensure that the route we go down supports your right to choose a small rural primary school within the community in which you live.

Vacancy – Midday Supervisory Assistant

We do have a new vacancy for a Midday Supervisory Assistant and if any of you are interested, please feel free to come and see me at either of our schools. The post is for 7.5 hours per week, term-time only and training will be provided in all aspects of the role. The post is ideal for a parent wishing to return to work on a phased basis and, as a federation that is committed to developing all of its staff, there will be wider career opportunities for the successful candidate to work in the classroom as well. Finally, if you know of any other community members who might be interested, please feel free to pass on my details. Many thanks.

Out and About

Thank you to those parents who have submitted pictures of their children out and about doing exciting and unusual things. We are currently in the process of adding these to the respective websites but we are in need of a few more. If, on the bank Holiday, or any other time, your child ends up in an amazing place or a really special achievement, please feel free to submit a digital image with a quick line of text to explain. I will then forward them onto our web management team, who will post them online. For myself, I will be sure to get a picture of me celebrating Leicester City winning the Premier League. I believe an open-top parade has been mooted but we'll see. I guess the other thing to keep in mind is that they haven't won yet, so I mustn't count my chickens, so to speak....

FOGS and FOLS

We are lucky to have such dedicated fundraisers at both of our schools but we are always eager to recruit a few more. If any of you can spare some time, even if it's just helping out on the day, please come and see us. As a staff, we very much appreciate all of the amazing additional resources that are purchased on behalf of our children and this makes a real difference to the quality of education we can offer.

Swimming – Year 6

Just a quick reminder that the children in years 3 and 4 will experience their last swimming session on **Wednesday 18th May** and I would like to congratulate them all on their amazing progress. From **Wednesday 25th May**, we will again be implementing the Year 6 Catch-Up programme. Our intention is to ensure that all of our children leave their primary school having reached the minimum expectation of 25m. For those that have reached this milestone, we will provide intensive, additional instruction in life-saving skills.

And Finally....

Please remember that Monday of next week is a Bank Holiday therefore children will return to school on Tuesday 4th May at the normal starting times. On behalf of the children, governors and staff, I hope you all have an enjoyable and restful time.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. L. Whitney – Head Teacher

Gedney Church End and Lutton St. Nicholas Federated Primary School