

Crosthwaite C.E. Primary School P.C.C. Report March 2015

As some of you may be aware, this year has seen the introduction of a new National Curriculum, as well as a new framework for Special Educational Needs, changes to assessment and a variety of further changes associated with these. This has meant that this academic year has been a little bit busier than usual and huge credit must go to the staff, governors and children for working so hard to ensure our high standards in all areas have been maintained whilst adapting to the multitude of changes forced upon us.

The school itself goes from strength to strength, with numbers increasing each term. Currently there are 56 children on roll, and a further 17 children that attend our nursery class (but not all at once!). Seven Year 6 children will leave us this coming July, with 13 starting in reception in September 2015 – a large intake for us. The school has very positive indications regarding children starting in the future and it is pleasing that there is such a high percentage of children attending the school that are from the catchment area. However, financially all schools – and small schools in particular – face a very uncertain future so our increased numbers on roll ‘balance’ out losses in other areas of the school budget. The next few years could be especially challenging and who knows what will happen after the General Election in May?!

Our strong links with a number of schools continue to develop, with the school heavily involved in the Kendal Collaborative Partnership (KCP) which involves all the Kendal schools and provides us with a wealth of opportunities for professional development, curriculum links and access to other resources. We also maintain strong links with Dallam School, utilising their facilities for Gymnastics for children of all ages. Our links with schools in Kenya and France continue, with the School Council leading fundraising for Nyandemra – our Kenyan Partner School. One further link we utilise is with Windermere Independent School – with all Key Stage 2 children benefitting from tuition in sailing and kayaking, something which we plan to continue in future years.

Following the construction of the new school hall – a superb resource for the children – we have continued to develop the school environment, with our new playground at the front of the school being the most noticeable improvement. This was made possible due to a grant from Sport England. We are currently trying to gain approval for a school car park on the land adjacent to school which was very kindly donated by Mr and Mrs Cartmell, though the Highways Agency has a range of criteria and concerns that we must address first. As we are aware that parking on the road around the start and end of school can be occasionally problematic for people we will do our utmost to gain permission to construct the car park. Staff and children are also working hard to build our school ‘farm’, and a lot of planting and planning is currently taking place with the possible addition of school chickens this coming summer term!

Our links with the Church continue to develop, with Rev. Woodcock and other Governors leading a range of improvements to many aspects of our Collective Worship. It has also been especially nice to see members of St Mary’s congregation attend our joint services – these services are something we hope will flourish in the future. As always, we receive superb support from the local community – Governors, Playgroup, FrOCs, Landowners and numerous other groups and people that volunteer to help in school, raise funds for the school or support in a range of other ways. Can I just take this opportunity to thank everyone for this continuing support – it is hugely appreciated!

All the children in school benefit from a variety of Educational Visits and this summer will be no different! As well as the usual local trips, sports tournaments and visitors to school that enhance teaching and learning the children in Key Stage 2 will be visiting Edinburgh! As part of this visit they will be staying in Perthshire to do some outdoor activities but also spending two days in Edinburgh itself, visiting – amongst other things – Edinburgh Castle.

Finally, we always enjoy welcoming members of the local community into school and would continue to do so. I would hope that if there was anything the school could do for the local community then people would let us know – we are very keen to continue to develop our local links as much as possible.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew J. J. J.", written in a cursive style.

Head Teacher.