**HUGH JOICEY C.E. AIDED FIRST SCHOOL, FORD**,



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Headteacher: Mrs Jacqueline Dalrymple M.Ed

**Happy, Healthy, Aspirational Learners in a Christian Community**

**8th October 2018**

Dear Parents and Families,

Autumn term is filling in fast and the children and teachers are very busy working on our challenging daily curriculum. Topics on Mayans and Chocolate, Solids, Liquids and Gases, Animals and Pets, the Great Fire of London and Autumn and Seeds are being enthusiastically studied across the school. We have had fantastic responses to Preview homework which is a great way of sharing your children’s learning at home and developing vocabulary for the week ahead. Thank you.

We are looking forward to sharing the children’s work with you on **open morning**, (Friday 26th October, following Mrs Green’s Assembly), and seeing you at Parents evening on Monday 15th .

**New teacher, Mrs Fiona Burn** joins us officially on Monday 5th November and she will also be coming in for a couple of visits to get to know the children and spend time on transition planning with Mrs Green. Mrs Burn is an experienced teacher, leaving Abbeyfields School in Morpeth, with a particular expertise in Computing and ICT. She was chosen from a strong field of candidates and impressed the Governors with her teaching, interview and dedication to the ethos of Ford school. We look forward to her becoming part of the team very quickly and making her feel very welcome.

**‘Seesaw’,** an online tool, has also been implemented in years 1-4 and we have had a great response to the photos and videos the staff are sharing of your children’s experiences and learning. It is similar to Tapestry in Reception. QR codes have been sent home with all the children so please do log on if you haven’t already and give us your feedback.

**Olympian visit** We didn’t think a Silver medal would be so big and heavy! The children had a great afternoon circuit training with Martial Arts expert Gemma Gibbons and were impressed as she demonstrated flipping the teachers! Thank you for your incredible sponsorship contributions, some of which goes to school PE resources and some of which goes to support athletes of the future – I think we definitely have some in school. Many of our children attend classes and were particularly inspired to meet a real British Champion.

**Skipping** was very successful and every child in the school took part in the workshops, developing their skills and fitness. Beech class will go on to perform a ‘skip-dance’ routine and challenges at the Swan Centre Skipping Festival, with partnership schools, later this term.

**Skipping ropes for sale - £5** if anyone would like one for practising at home.

**Harvest Festival:** Thank you for your generous contributions and lovely turnout at church. Father Christopher led a great service and the children sang beautifully. We are already planning the Christmas service!

**Communication:** we endeavour to keep you well-informed about all the learning and activities that we have going on in school. The newsletters, website [www.ford.northumberland.sch.uk](http://www.ford.northumberland.sch.uk), email messages, Tapestry, Seesaw, Reading diaries, Open mornings, Parent meetings, workshops and Assemblies are all ways for us to celebrate and share our children’s learning as well as to keep you up to date. We also have an open-door policy so you can call in directly – please bear in mind staff are responsible for the pupils from 8.45 until they are all dismissed safely to buses or adults at home line, so please speak to them outside of those times.

Please call or email us directly if you have any queries, and remember to ask the children too. We will be happy to help.

**Action plan:** Recent visits by our County School Improvement Partner, the Diocese and our Governors, as well as our own self-evaluation, judge our school to be Good in all areas. We continually strive to improve our children’s education in a happy, healthy and Christian environment. Areas we are focusing on to develop include even greater proportions of children achieving the age related expectations in Writing and to be making good progress in spite of disadvantage or Special educational Needs or disability. Furthermore, we are developing our curriculum specifically in Music, History, Geography and PSHE, embedding British Values to prepare pupils to be active citizens in a diverse modern Britain.

**e-safety:** I am forwarding a document via email regarding online safety for parents, including age ratings (e.g Fortnite has a PEGI rating of 12, “with the contact element likely to expose children to swearing and offensive language from strangers”). Also included are parental control for YouTube Kids, Parents Guide to Technology, Supporting young people online and Keeping young children safe online, as well as a link to Young Minds (focusing on young people’s mental health) [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) . In an ever-changing world of technology we want children to have the confidence to access all that is good online and to speak up about any negatives they encounter. Please go to [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com) and www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have -a-conversation

**Sickness bug:** unfortunately at this time of year sickness bugs do occur. We must remind you that children must stay off school for **48 hours** after the last episode, even if they seem well. We appreciate this can be inconvenient but it is to protect the other children and the staff.

If you have any questions, queries or concerns please contact me or your child’s teacher so we can resolve them as soon as possible. Thank you for your support as ever.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Dalrymple