

## Solway Community School

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17<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

As we hurtle towards the end of the school year we are enjoying a hectic last week. As I write, students have just completed a fantastic Sports Day on the school field; as always, sportsmanship and sporting excellence have been on show and the students have had a great day with everyone taking part (even Mr Davies running 1500m for Franklin and a spirited three legged race by Mrs Hurst and Miss McGregor!).

Last Wednesday was our inaugural Community Day and it was great to see staff, students, parents, grandparents and members of the community, together with Northern Gas, painting the school and planting a garden which looks fabulous and makes a lovely place for the students to use at breaks and lunchtimes. Many thanks to everyone who contributed time or equipment to make this such a successful day – it was so good we are going to make it a regular event.

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> was our usual Walk for Water event, raising money for Water Aid; and the Coast to Coast Bike Challenge set off from Carlisle Castle early Saturday morning, finishing on Monday night at Lindisfarne. Good luck to our intrepid cyclists, including Mr Green and Miss Dakers who are pedalling with them. The last week of term is Olympic Week – the students will enjoy two days of interhouse activity, followed by our Grand Day Out to Carlisle on Wednesday. Thursday morning is the tug of war, and we finish just after 1:00 on Thursday, bringing to an end what has been a fast moving year.

All these events have been or will be posted on Facebook and on the school webpage. In this electronic era, social and electronic media have meant that we can keep you up to date with events and news very quickly, and so we have decided to concentrate on using Facebook and the website rather than a half termly newsletter to keep in touch. I will of course still write with news or information where appropriate.

Looking ahead to next September, the collaboration with Beacon Hill continues. Thank you to all the parents who came to the Q&A session in school which was a useful evening for parents to find out more about what we are doing. We will have a repeat of this evening later in the year – as suggested, at a later time to allow as many as possible to attend.

Many of you will be buying new uniform over the summer; we want our students to look as smart as possible and will be raising the bar in terms of our expectations of dress in September. The expected uniform is black trousers (tailored please, not skinny fit or jeans – we have some examples of accepted styles in school if you would like to see) or skirt, white shirt and tie (done up properly and shirt tucked in) or Solway polo shirt, and school jumper. Black shoes should be worn; rules on jewellery are for health and safety reasons, so please don't allow your child to wear a nose stud or anything more than one pair of stud earrings. Acrylic nails are also not allowed (you can't catch a netball or use a technical machine with enormous nails!). If you are unsure about any aspect of school

uniform, please come in and speak to office staff who will be pleased to help. We will also post pictures of expected dress on Facebook and the web site for clarification.

Can I also remind you about the importance of good attendance for your children's education. The school target for attendance is 95%, and the Local Authority have strict rules about maintaining this. Holidays in term time are a particular bug bear and our hands are tied – we cannot authorise these unless there are exceptional circumstances, and these are rare. Also, the LA has the right to prosecute parents taking children out of school in term time, particularly Year 11 GCSE students. The rules governing attendance are on the school web page and I urge you to read up on them to be clear on the local authority position.

As is usual in all schools, at the end of the school year we have staff moving on and new appointments made. Leaving us are Mrs Hurst with a well deserved promotion to be Head of Technology at Newman School in Carlisle, and Miss McGregor is taking up an English and Drama position at St Benedict's in Workington (and thus taking an hour each way from her daily commute!).

This term we have been delighted to welcome back Mrs Woodman from maternity leave (and baby Logan as the newest but one member of the Solway family!), and Mr Williams joined us as Maths and RE teacher. Mr Hayhurst is covering Mrs Smith's maternity leave in Geography (baby Jacob has safely arrived – congratulations to the whole family!), and we have three new members of staff for September - Mrs Brady (Maths), Mrs Firth (English) and Mr Ainley (Technology). We are fortunate to have a strong and committed teaching staff and we are looking forward to working together next year.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at school if you have any questions or concerns. As always, my office door is open and I would be pleased to see you – just call the office to arrange a convenient appointment.

This year, although busy, has been successful and enjoyable; students have worked hard and made good progress, and we have had a myriad of extra curricular activities which makes school life the colourful experience it is.

Dates for the new school year are on the web site and Facebook; staff have Inset days on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September, and we look forward to welcoming students back, and meeting our new intake, on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September. In the meantime, I wish you all a relaxing and safe summer break and hope the sun shines on us all!

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely



Judith Schafer  
Headteacher

