



# SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWSLETTER

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Nikki Pidgeon  
Head Teacher

Jon Watson  
Deputy Head

Sarah Millar  
Lead for Behaviour, SEAL and PE

Laura Leitch  
Specialist Leader  
in Education, Leading  
Practitioner for  
Teaching and

Jo Seddon  
Lead for Maths

Michael Lomas  
Assessment Lead

Jayne Patrick  
School Business  
Manager

### Welcome to the Spring Newsletter

As always the pupils and staff continue to work hard, supported by the parents and families of our growing community. Every day we see so many things to be proud of and it is so important to stop and take time to reflect on the amazing young people that attend Welton School. It really is a genuine privilege to work with them.

### School improvement update:

**“To create a culture of exceptional expectations resulting in consistently outstanding teaching and learning across the school”**

### Writing

This term we have repeated the *Write Away training* for new and old staff alike. This method of marking and giving individual feedback and improvement time is based on up-to-date research on the most effective strategy to improve pupil outcomes.

“A *Write Away Together* session involves a dialogue between a child and a trained partner about a piece of independent writing. The aim of the dialogue is to help the child understand how they can improve their work at text, sentence and word level and to embed strategies that will improve children's independent writing. “

“*The model Praise, Improve, Plan* underpins *Write Away Together*. Each session is based on a piece of writing done in the class, which is then celebrated and improved. “

### Talk for Writing

Every year group is using an approach referred to as “Talk for Writing” to further improve the quality of writing. Evidence of the impact of this work is evident in the pupils’ presentation folders which will be available again at parent meetings. Staff have been involved in intensive training both external and in house to build the expertise to implement this strategy.

*“Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. Through fun activities that help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to craft their writing, children*

*are helped to write in the same style. <http://www.talk4writing.co.uk/about/>”*

### Mathematics

The new national curriculum for mathematics is firmly based on the mastery approach. As a school we are re-designing the curriculum and our approaches to assessment and differentiation to enable this have high impact. This also involves different and more flexible ways of group children for mathematics based on much more rigorous assessment on a daily basis. Mr Lomas is leading professional development in this area.

Key features of the mastery approach:-

“A detailed, structured curriculum is mapped out across all phases, ensuring continuity and supporting transition. Effective mastery curricula in mathematics are designed in relatively small carefully sequenced steps, which must each be mastered before pupils move to the next stage. Fundamental skills and knowledge are secured first. This often entails focusing on curriculum content in considerable depth at early stages.”

### Teaching and Learning Toolkit

This term all teachers attended training led by a consultant (Andy Hind) whose programmes have been designed to develop professional awareness around features of outstanding practice, including:

Effective learning approaches for different types of learner; Processing and understanding learning .... Moving beyond shallow learning; Developing meta-cognitive classrooms and Learning to learn strategies; Essential intelligent behaviours ; Developing growth mindset; Effective learning processes

### Governing Body

Please look out for the latest invitation to become a Governor of Welton Primary School. We currently have two vacancies and I would urge you to consider joining us. There is a time commitment but no specialist knowledge or skills are required. We try to ensure our meetings are rigorous but there is also humour and a down to earth approach to the role. If you would like an informal chat please ring Mrs Pidgeon.

### **Promoting Diversity and Respect**

At Welton, we are very proud of our growing school and its community. As each year passes, not only are we growing in size but also in diversity. We now have children and families with backgrounds from a wide range of countries and/or religions. We are an inclusive school and strive to promote key values, such as respect, throughout our curriculum and in all we do.

As part of our promotion of respect of cultural diversity we would be very grateful to receive contact from any parent or family member who would be willing to support us. This could be in a variety of ways, from volunteering time in school to work with the children or sharing knowledge, resources and expertise with staff. For example, we would very much welcome volunteers speaking to a class/group about their country of birth, religion or background, or by providing their time to work with small groups of children to prepare traditional food. Alternatively, reading a traditional story with children or sharing traditional clothing or artefacts would also be informative and appreciated.

If you feel that you can help in any way, we would really like you to get in touch with Mr Watson by either phoning/calling into school to arrange a meeting, or by emailing [jwatson@weltonprimaryschool.com](mailto:jwatson@weltonprimaryschool.com). Your support would be very much appreciated not only by the staff, but more importantly by the children. We look forward to hearing from you.

### **W.I.L.S. Update**

Our Welton Independent Learning Skills (W.I.L.S.) are now firmly embedded across the school. Children use the WILS language with confidence and accuracy in their lessons daily. They are also highly visible (our large WILS Wheels) on display around corridors and in classrooms, as well as being used on achievement certificates in our Friday 'Special Mentions' celebration assembly.

A recap of our 8 W.I.L.S:

Stickability, Personal Best, Risk It, Organised, Asking Questions, Focus, Collaboration & Reflection.

How are your WILS skills? Which are you confident in? Which do you want to continue to improve?

### **W.I.L.S. in Focus: Personal Best**

It is really common to hear children talking about a P.B. or personal best. Perhaps we think of P.B's more traditionally in areas such as sport/P.E. However, when we talk about Personal Best in school it can cover a variety of subjects, but quite simply it is when a pupil has either done their very best work or demonstrated their very best effort in something. It is really important to note that this may not be the 'best in the class' but is the best by that particular pupil. For example, I may not ever be the fastest runner and the most accurate speller, but I can achieve my personal fastest time or highest score. It is this attitude to want to achieve a P.B. that we are so keen to promote.

We want to help children foster their independent desire to do well and produce work that they are proud of. We want children to have it inbuilt and for it be second nature, to produce their very best and not to settle for anything less!

*What can this look like?*

Simple examples of P.B's can be the more obvious, such as getting the best score in the weekly Big Maths Beat That Challenge in class. In this example, children are competing against themselves, trying to improve on previous performances in terms of score etc.

P.B's can also come in other forms academically. For example, in writing P.B's can be awarded by a Teacher or Teaching Assistant when a pupil's overall composition is deemed to be the best they have ever done. There is nothing more pleasing for a pupil or teacher alike when you can talk about a piece of writing being a P.B. – the smiles say it all!

P.B's can be demonstrated by attitudes and behavior too, for example the consistency of effort all day or week, the ability to get on with others, the level of participation in class or willingness to try your best in class.

Our children are confident in using the language of Personal Best and W.I.L.S in general. One of the nicest and most rewarding things to observe in school is when you see children spontaneously celebrating other people's achievements, praising, applauding, smiling and encouraging their peers for achieving a personal best. The desire to achieve a Personal Best is a great attitude and skill to have, to develop and to improve. We are proud to promote this skill and attitude at Welton.

When was the last time you set yourself a target and then worked hard to achieve it? How did it make you feel when you did? Can you use the language of Personal best at home?

### **Social Emotional Aspects of Learning**

In response to the changing needs of the pupils in our school, we are introducing a wider range of strategies and approaches to ensuring **all** our pupils' emotional well-being is high on the agenda. Some of the approaches we are developing will be of more significance in a period of change or distress eg family break up or loss of a family member, but most are ensuring the high levels of emotional literacy and resilience necessary to become high functioning young people.

#### **The D.E.N.**

Over the past few weeks the room formerly referred to as the 'Community Room' has been significantly changed in both use and appearance and now has a new name. 'The D.E.N.' stands for Develop, Encourage and Nurture. The room has now been split into three areas, a brand new safe and practical kitchen, a small group working area, and an informal area with bean bags etc. A timetable is in place for groups of children and individuals to access the room to support their learning and development. Mrs L Watson will soon be holding an after school cooking club in the room. We are really pleased with 'The D.E.N.' and its popularity and use already suggest it is going to be a great addition to the facilities at Welton.

#### **The Sensory Room**

You may remember that we had a successful 'Awards for All' grant to fund this fabulous resource, and now the sensory room is finished and in operation. The room is suitable for individuals and small groups and can be used for specialist work and more generic curriculum work. We also have a regular slot for one of the local day care nurseries, who use it for a specific programme of work.

Sensory Rooms are a quiet, calm space where pupils can focus intently on following instructions, responding to a curriculum stimulus or carrying out an intensive piece of work without distraction.

#### **Peer Mentoring**

Miss Seddon is currently introducing a new initiative in school known as 'Peer Mentoring'. Peer mentors are children in school who are trained to act as mediators, helping other children work through problems they may have. These may be in areas such as homework or disagreements with friends. The mentors will provide a safe place where issues can be discussed and, hopefully, resolved in a calm and purposeful way.

Before half term, children from Year 5 and 6 were given the opportunity to apply for this important role. We were amazed at the response! The application forms were of high quality, very thoughtful and honest. It was a very difficult job to choose! We now have 24 dedicated peer mentors in place and the next step is training. Every week until the Easter break, the chosen children will be trained in the art of peer mediation including: active listening, encouraging other children to think about consequences and facilitating discussions. By the Summer term, they will be equipped and ready with a 'special' place and wearing a 'special' jumper to begin their important new role in school.

#### **Massage in School**

Mrs Leitch is currently establishing a massage programme across all year groups after taking part in a rigorous training programme which enables her to teach the children to give and receive massage from their peers. The aim of this is to promote and encourage positive touch and teach children relaxation techniques which they will hopefully carry with them throughout their life. Touch triggers the body to release a feel good hormone (oxytocin) which makes children feel calm, positive and optimistic. The touch strokes themselves have a similar effect to the brain gym and 'Activate' which we are currently using in school to activate the brain.

We are hoping that by incorporating regular massage time into the timetable it will help our children to be ready to learn, both physically and mentally. Furthermore, the positive relationships which we envisage the children will inevitably make, will hopefully help to boost levels of positive collaboration.

If you are interested in finding out more, please look out for details of a parent workshop which Mrs Leitch will be running in the Summer term.

**Parent Workshops**

Following the success of the parent workshops we ran in the Autumn term, Mrs Leitch will be repeating them for those who were unable to attend.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar workshop - Thursday 23 April 2015 from 2pm

Helping your child to make progress in reading - Wednesday 29 April 2015 from 2pm

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Friday 27 March	Break up for Easter Holidays
Tuesday 14 April	Back to School
Monday 4 May	Bank Holiday Monday
Monday 11 May	KS2 SATS week
Friday 22 May	Break up for May Half Term
Monday 1 June	Back to School
<b>Thursday 25 June</b>	<b><i>Moving up Day</i></b>
<b>Friday 3 July</b>	<b><i>Sports Day</i></b>
<b>Monday 6 July</b>	<b><i>Reserve Sports Day</i></b>

***LOOK AT THESE IMPORTANT  
DATES!***

**Charity Events.**

We are keen to develop children's understanding of charity and supporting those people who are less fortunate than ourselves. There are so many worthy causes that ideally we would like to support but we have chosen to have particular times of the school year when we will have more of a fundraising focus. We are looking forward to organising and running potential fund raising activities later in the school year – our school council may well be involved in this. Watch this space for more information in the coming months.

**PE**

We are really pleased at the number of children taking part in our PE clubs at the moment:

We have been able to put two netball teams into the Hull Netball League and the 18 children taking part have started their training sessions every Thursday morning at 8am. Thank you to our volunteer helper, Mrs Matthews, for helping with the training. The coach for this half term from First Steps sports is providing two athletic clubs on a Monday; one for KS1 after school and KS2 at 8am. We also continue to have Mr Rowe providing a football club on a Friday for Years 2 and 3. Ross Atkinson, the junior cricket coach for Welton Cricket club, has started a club for children from Years 5 and 6 on a Tuesday with a view to forming a team to enter competitions. Mr O'Rourke is starting a cricket club on a Friday, for any child interested from Years 3 and 4.

This half term, Year 5 attended the winter festival of sport and took part in a number of activities at South Hunsley High School such as swimming and rock climbing. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience. This week, Year 4 are taking part in a dance competition, also at South Hunsley, competing against other Year 4 classes in our cluster group.

Great news! Our swimming team won the cluster group swimming event and have progressed to the regional final to be held at Beverley in June. Fantastic effort from all the squad!

Our focus in outdoor PE for the remainder of this half term is Hockey. All children from Year 1 upwards will have coaching sessions with Mr Evans each week. Please keep checking that your child has the correct outdoor PE kit to attend these sessions safely and comfortably - including studded boots (not metal studs) and an old pair of jogging bottoms and sweatshirt.

## Assessment

Mr Lomas is the assessment leader, and he has written the following to advise you how the school is managing the changes to assessment at Welton:

As you will have been informed during the latest parent evenings, the government recently introduced a new National Curriculum and with it, new arrangements for assessing pupils. The main headline is that the old system of numbered levels that you are no doubt familiar with has been scrapped. After a fairly extensive review, they were deemed to be too confusing and imprecise when it came to reporting what children could do, and what they still needed to achieve.

From this year, in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5, children will no longer be assessed as *level one* or *level three* (for example) in the core academic areas (Years 2 and 6 will continue on the old system until September 2015). Instead, in line with the new curriculum (which promotes the idea of covering fewer 'big' areas of core numeracy and literacy in greater depth); pupils will be assessed against **end of year expectations**. These expectations take the form of statements, which describe the level of performance that a pupil in a particular year group would be expected to have reached by the end of the academic year. To take an example from my current year (Year 5) in maths: *pupils should know angles are measured in degrees: estimate and compare acute, obtuse and reflex angles*. If a child meets this, and all of the other *key end of year* statements (some statements carry more weight than others as they are deemed to be more significant: e.g. place value in maths), then they can be said to be **meeting** the end of year expectations. If they do not meet these key performance indicators, they will be **emerging** towards the end of year standard. If they have mastered the performance statements, and can demonstrate their understanding across a range of contexts and situations, they could be said to be **exceeding** the end of year standard.

Because all of this represents a significant change, not only to assessment practices, but also to how we report progress and attainment to parents, we are extremely keen at Welton to ensure that we take our time and put in place a coherent, workable and clear system for assessing our pupils. At the heart of our approach is a desire for our pupils to work towards mastery of the fundamental knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy. As a school, the most important aspect of the assessment system we are developing will be that we can say, with confidence, exactly what our pupils can do, and where they need to go next.

During the next round of parent evenings, you should start to have conversations with your child's class teacher about how they are progressing in relation to the new assessment standards. Furthermore, we will be using the language of **emerging**, **meeting** and **exceeding** in our annual reports to parents. In all cases, the overall assessment of your child's attainment will be supported with a detailed description of the areas in which your child is attaining well, and those in which they still need further work to master. It is worth noting that the standards inherent in the new curriculum have been raised; and that the content of the curriculum is significantly more challenging. This means that it will be more difficult for children to meet the end of year standards than it was previously.

Although these changes are substantial, I do feel that in having clear end of year expectations instead of numbered levels that span different year groups; parents should be able to gain a more accurate picture of their child's academic achievements at Welton.

Mr Lomas would be happy to discuss the changes to assessment and reporting with parents if you require any further information.

### **Trips and Visits**

Since returning to school after Christmas, many year groups have experienced some trips, visits and workshops as part of their curriculum, getting first hand experience of what they are learning:-

Foundation parents were invited in to school to take part in a Chinese Craft Morning, and last week they walked to Brough Library as part of their World Book Day activities. Year 1 went to the Castle Museum at York as part of their History topic on 'Toys Through Time', where the children were able to explore and play with toys from the past.

Year 4 had a visitor in school during January to support their learning on 'Romans'. Through the 'Taste of History' workshop, the children helped cook Roman food, looked at artefacts and tasted the food. This was continued in lesson times when Mrs Drewery cooked other dishes with the children. Year 4 also took part in Pedestrian Training in January, where members of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Road Safety team took groups of children out onto the estate to teach them road safety.

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 took part in a GIST Road Safety programme and a Healthy Lifestyles Activity Day during January.

Year 5 were studying 'Earth and Space' in Science, therefore went to York to the York Astronomical Society Observatory to further their learning. Year 6 enjoyed their visit to South Hunsley School last week to watch the dress rehearsal for 'A Little Shop of Horrors'.

Lots more exciting things are being planned for the rest of the academic year!

### **Internet Safety Day**

Internet Safety Day was on Tuesday 10 February, with most classes spending time thinking about how to use the internet safely at home and in school. With the recent explosion of social websites, it is important that we work as a team to remind the children about the proper use of the internet, to keep them happy and safe.

### **Other admin notices:-**

- Can we please just remind parents that if your child has any sickness or diarrhoea the school policy is for 48 hours absence from school. As well as to protect other children in the school, staff absences put pressures on other staff and unfortunately good supply teachers are not always available. This then disrupts learning. Please help us by adhering to this policy.
- The school is collecting the Sainsbury Active Vouchers again this year. We would be very grateful if you could ask friends, family, neighbours etc if they would save them for the school. Thank you!
- A letter has been sent to all parents advertising two parent governor vacancies on Welton Primary School's Governing Body. If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school to discuss the role.
- We still seem to have a tremendous amount of lost property in the school. Named items are returned to the children. Every night, packed lunch boxes that have been left on the trollies will be placed in the reception area for parents to collect. Every Friday, all lost property will be placed in the reception area for parents to look through and items will be disposed of, or recycled through the Friends of Welton Primary School, if they are not claimed. Please encourage your child to look after their belongings and put things in the lockers!
- The school website is currently being developed. We are aware that our current website does not always reflect current information and hopefully the new one will be up and running soon.