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Principal: John Fryer

5.9.2017

Dear Parent / Carer,

It is the start of another school year – but one which will be quite significant in the school's history as there is potentially a lot happening in the next 12 months!

First of all we have Ofsted to deal with. We were all devastated by the outcome last time and have worked extremely hard to address the issues. The HMI was very impressed with our progress 12 months ago and we are expecting a re-visit this term where hopefully we will get a judgement that truly reflects this school and the hard work our staff put in.

We are also looking into the possibility of joining Cockburn's Multi Academy Trust. We have been very impressed with Cockburn and their plans for the future and feel it will benefit our school to be part of a community group of primary and high schools in the south Leeds area. We are only in the very early stages of this process and have submitted an application to the DfE. We will keep you informed of how this develops and any consultation meetings – but this is just in the very early stages and we can always pull out if we ultimately feel this is not right for our school. However, I believe this will be a very positive move and will only strengthen our school and our place in the community.

We are now completely full and there is a high demand for places at the SILC. As a result of this we have been looking for alternative solutions. One offer we have had is from Cockburn Academy at their newly acquired Cockburn John Charles (old South Leeds Academy) school to house our Post-16 students and free up space for the Local Authority on our main-site. Our Post-16 had to move out of Rodillian as there was not enough space and have managed very well in our main-site new build. Having looked around the facilities at Cockburn and the many opportunities available on this mainstream site we think this could be a good move for our Post-16 students. We have initially agreed to have a phased trial run with this to see if it is suitable for our students and will begin with some half-day visits before building up to a day or two then get feedback from staff and students before offering a consultation on how to proceed further. If all goes well we would like to look at something more permanent being reached in the spring term.

A number of senior leaders, including myself, are looking at retiring in the next 12 months and this will also have an impact on the school. We have a strong and effective middle management team and we are confident that between them and any future appointments the school will remain strong and successful. If we do become part of the MAT it will also offer further security and stability of leadership. So all-in-all this could be quite a momentous year!!

We have a number of new staff who have joined us. We are really pleased with these appointments and I am sure they will add to the quality of the school. As always, with new staff, pupils, changes of classes or groups or rooms etc we do experience some early problems with some pupils settling in. In the majority of cases these are quickly resolved in the first month or so as they



Are our medical records and emergency details up-to-date? Please inform us immediately



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become familiar with new routines. However, if things are not working out over time we will look at classes again after half term to see if there are any better solutions.

We are hoping to acquire the land that used to be the Nesfield Centre and then if we secure further funds in the future we can perhaps expand on that. We are also looking to acquire some land behind the new build then look for some grants to provide further leisure facilities for our pupils which could also be accessed by the community out of hours.

Our kitchen has been refurbished on the main-site and once some teething problems have been overcome it should make things more efficient for all.

It was great to see everyone back today and how smart so many of them looked in their uniforms!! No-one was upset and the vast majority looked pleased to be back! It was just a pity it was raining!!

A big thanks to all the staff that gave up their own holiday time to provide a summer Playscheme – I know you really appreciate having this offer available to many of you.

We are still looking for some parent Governors - if anyone is interested please contact the Office and speak to Naomi or Sharon Crowther.

We have a further training day for the main site and Windmill (NOT Rodillian) on Friday 15th September and Wednesday 4th October before we break for half term on Friday 20th October. Rodillian staff will inform their pupils of the training days on their site as they are linked to Rodillian Academy opening days.

I hope your child has had a good first day and quickly settles in. Please feel free to contact his/her teacher, or myself, if you have any concerns.

Take care.

John Fryer



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