



To all parents and carers,

7<sup>th</sup> December 2021

I am writing to you as new chair of Governors to give you an update.

I am delighted to announce that we have a new Executive head teacher and a Class 4 teacher joining our school in the new year.

Mrs Jemma Nicholson is an experienced school leader who is currently head teacher at Longtown Primary School. She will continue in that role and join our school on a part-time basis from January.

We are very pleased to welcome her colleague Allison Kenyon as the Class 4 teacher. Mrs Kenyon is also very experienced and will take on the same number of teaching hours Ms Stacey has provided to Class 4. She is expected to be with us until the end of the academic year and will spend some of her time undertaking assistant head teacher duties.

In addition, we are also very pleased to announce that Kathryn Grayson is to increase her hours. She will continue as Class 1 teacher but will also work closely alongside Mrs Nicholson and Mrs Kenyon as a temporary assistant head to work on our school improvement plan.

Mrs Nicholson will be with us for a day and half each week, Mrs Kenyon will work for three and a half days and Mrs Grayson will work for four days.

Together this new leadership team will work to support staff and our families and ensure all our children receive the best education and feel safe, secure and happy at school.

Jemma and Alison will be at school on Wednesday morning this week and will be available to say hello at the school gates, before meeting the children during the morning. I am sure all will give them a warm welcome. There will be additional opportunity to speak with Jemma and Alison after the Christmas period.

Cumbria Education Trust (CET), our local multi academy trust, of which Longtown Primary School is a part, has supported us with this arrangement. They will continue to offer support and advice over the next couple of terms as we assess the future direction of travel for our school following a decline in pupil numbers coupled with increasing financial pressures.

As you are aware, CET have been carrying out a process of Due Diligence in recent weeks to see if it would be viable for us to join their organisation when the time is right. Likewise, the governing body has been carrying out its own investigations to see if CET would be the best fit for our school. As part of this we have been looking at how they support other similar sized primary schools in Cumbria and we hope to publish a report setting out our findings in due course.

There will be a consultation exercise with all staff and parents in the new year so you will have a chance to ask questions and discuss the options for our school. If you wish to do any investigations of your own the Cumbria Education Trust website is well worth a look.

We are, of course, sorry to be losing Ms Stacey at the end of this term. We wish her all the best for her new adventures. We would like to thank her for steering the school through such difficult times recently and for all her hard work and dedication over the years she has been with us. She will be sorely missed.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to share our thanks to all our wonderful staff for their dedication, hard work and patience over the past 18 months. It has been a truly challenging and unprecedented time and as governors we really appreciate how hard the staff at Castle Carrock School work. Thank you. We know it remains difficult with Covid still around, and there are ongoing worries for all of us and our families at what should be a joyous time of celebration.

We hope you can all relax and enjoy the holiday, and the children can return refreshed in 2022. We will continue to do everything we can to move forwards together to give the children the best education we can. If you have any concerns please don't hesitate to contact Miss Stacey until the end of term, or myself via [clerk@castlecarrock.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@castlecarrock.cumbria.sch.uk) and we will do our best to allay them.

Best Wishes

Kirstie Smith (Chair) on behalf of Castle Carrock Governors

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