

# KETTLEWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL - JULY 2011

## Letter from Richard Humpidge:

As you are all aware Kettlewell School is currently sharing our Head Teacher with Grassington Primary School on a temporary basis. Over the last few months negotiations have been ongoing to make this a more permanent arrangement. So it is with great pleasure that I can tell you all that from September 2011 this is going to be the case. Lesley Taylor will be the shared Head Teacher for Kettlewell and Grassington Primary Schools. This is a permanent arrangement and will be the start of much closer collaboration between these schools.

Whilst undergoing these negotiations there have been two over-riding concerns of the Governing Bodies of both schools; firstly - the educational provision and welfare of the children is absolutely paramount; secondly - the children will be taught in the schools where they are registered as a matter of course. There may well be some coming together of pupils for shared days of DT or drama for example but these will be the exception.

I do hope you will join the whole Governing Body and Staff of Kettlewell School and see these as very positive developments for the future of our school. As always, if you would like more details or to discuss this (or anything else) please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Humpidge (Chair of Governors Kettlewell Primary School)

## FAQ with Lesley Taylor:

As you can see from the letter above, we have now entered into an exciting new collaboration with Grassington Primary School. I firmly believe that this will be very beneficial for the future of education in Upper Wharfedale and I am very excited about accepting this new challenge. Below are some of the FAQ's that I hope will help to give a greater understanding of our partnership.

### Questions

Mrs Taylor we understand that you are to be a 'shared head' with Grassington School and so not always on the premises at Kettlewell. Will you be available to parents who need to be able to discuss things with you?

Yes, always. Both the staff member available at school during my absence and the administrator have access to my I-Phone to text, speak or e mail so that I am always kept up to date with everything minute by minute. Should I be required to phone a parent I will do this immediately or arrange a fast appointment. I have also given out my mobile number to parents who required this to be able to contact me already since I accepted the Acting Headship at Grassington. I also make myself available outside working hours if necessary.

Who will be in charge of the school when you are not there?

Mrs Tracy Briggs and Mrs Kate Malley, who are also part of the Senior Management team, will be available to answer any queries or questions. Kate has completed a Middle Management course and has done an excellent job in this role since the appointment in January 2011. Tracy is a qualified School Business Manager. I have every confidence in their abilities as they have already tackled many issues since we took on the Confederation. They always seek my advice and approval if

required and this is also reassuring for all of our stakeholders. I will still be in charge of the school but they will be able to deal with all situations and seek my support as required.

Will the children in both schools have regular contact with you and how?

Yes, there will be very regular contact. Children contact is my daily fix! I've spent 33yrs in education and I love them dearly. I will be taking some assemblies, doing small amounts of teaching, observing and visiting them EVERY TIME I am in school. I will be monitoring the learning in the classroom very regularly to maintain the highest standards as well as keeping an eye on the teaching of course! I wander out at break and lunch times as well on occasion. I enjoy initiating whole school days to monitor areas of the curriculum and I will have a big input into the teaching on these days. I am also a very keen musician and have some ideas for the future in drama as well, so that I can get to know their individual talents very well. Lucky me, to have such a privileged role to play in the school.

How will this arrangement of your time benefit the education of the children of Kettlewell School?

It will mean that I can concentrate on the role of a Headteacher and not be torn between teaching and leadership and management. Therefore, I will be able to monitor teaching and learning and also observe teaching to maintain quality of a very high standard thus ensuring the best results and progress for all of the pupils in our care. This also means that staff feel supported and can move forward and make progress in their own careers whilst offering the pupils a consistent approach to planning, tracking achievements and making school exciting and happy. I will also be able to keep abreast of the important issues in line with the Curriculum and the 21st Century, ensuring we are leading the best practice of the times and not following others example. The pupils will benefit from having a leader who is monitoring everything in school to ensure they are happy and making the best of their potential, instead of being pulled out of the classroom to deal with a situation when they should be getting the full attention of a teacher.

We want our schools in Upper Wharfedale to have a secure and sustainable future. How do you think that your appointment as a shared head will make this more likely?

Collaboration is the key to ensuring that we all work together to maintain the best practice possible and more importantly to share this practice. Some of our schools in the Dale will have differing levels of experience in various areas and we need to share these amongst each other to prove that just because we are small does not mean we don't have a wide variety of experience amongst all of our staff. I will be ensuring we are not duplicating things across the cluster which could be putting stress on our very small budgets. As the leader of the Cluster of Heads in the area I have initiated doing Appreciative Enquiry Learning Walks between our establishments so that we can get to know one another better and work together to establish new ways of planning and thinking. These "walks" will help us to visit each other's schools and see the many wonderful things happening. Our intention, is that this will initiate much discussion about how to maintain our wonderful schools as individual organisations whilst working together to plan our futures. We want to keep our unique individuality in our school; however, we are all striving to achieve the same outcomes which are to let every child reach their fullest potential. I will dedicate myself to ensuring we investigate every avenue possible to sustain the future of education in this wonderful Dale and I am excited that everyone in the area is passionate about this too.