



The Upper Wharfedale Primary Federation

December 2017

Dear Parents/Carers,

The Governors have met on several occasions since the October communication evenings and have made some decisions on a planned way forward. I am writing to you today to share that thinking with you.

Firstly, we are pleased that the revised forecasts for the 2017/8 financial year are showing significant improvement. You will see from the figures that we are successfully closing the gap and making financial improvements across the Federation: these improvements are a reflection of judicious financial management, coupled with some changing circumstances. We have been granted a licensed deficit because of the improved position across the four schools – a big advantage of having federated.

The latest figures are set out below. Please note that these do not include the new national funding formula which will not be reflected in budgets until next financial year.

In year balance (£000s)	2017/8		2018/9	
	Roadshow	Latest Forecast	Roadshow	Latest Forecast
Burnsall	-£28.4	-£26.5	-£21.4	-£40.3
Cracoe	£2.6	£2.8	-£12.3	£16.4
Grassington	-£5.2	-£5.9	-£20.6	-£24.1
Kettlewell	£2.1	£11.0	-£31.4	-£21.5
Federation Total	-£28.9	-£18.6	-£85.7	-£69.5

End year balance (£000s)	2017/8		2018/9	
	Roadshow	Latest Forecast	Roadshow	Latest Forecast
Burnsall	-£16.5	-£14.6	-£37.9	-£55.0
Cracoe	£44.1	£44.3	£31.8	£60.7
Grassington	£30.0	£29.3	£9.4	£5.2
Kettlewell	-£12.6	-£3.7	-£44.0	-£25.1
Federation Total	£45.0	£55.3	-£40.7	-£14.2

In spite of these improvements, you can see we are still forecasting sizeable year end deficits in 2018/9.

We are therefore constantly looking at further ways to improve our financial position, whilst continuing to provide high quality education for our children. It is however clear that there will be a significant funding shortfall in future years unless we take further action now.

It was clear from the responses to our communication road shows, that the preferred option in the community was to maintain four sites and attempt to 'mitigate the deficit' through continued fund raising and planned giving/sponsorship. We are already planning to move forward on this basis in the New Year, and details of how this will operate will be communicated to you and all members of the community early next term. It is our profound hope that the additional funds raised will eliminate the projected deficits and enable us to rebuild our reserves.

I must stress that any sponsored giving is open to all members of the community, is purely voluntary, and in no way constitutes a fee for parents on the education of their children: this remains free, and no parent or carer will be under any obligation to contribute.

Secondly, we are very pleased to report that there are no plans at this point to consult on closure of any of our sites.

Thirdly, we are able to take advantage of the opportunities the Federation offers by continuing to develop a programme of combining small groups of children, on an ad hoc basis, to enhance their education and avoid some of the difficulties implicit in small cohorts. Mrs Morton Lee will organise this after full discussion and agreement with individual parents/carers. We will also continue to extend our marketing to attract pupils and families from further afield.

By taking these steps, we hope to be able to sustain sites that are financially and educationally viable. However, should the financial responses from the communities be insufficient to absorb the deficit and/or should the numbers at any of the schools begin to impact upon the quality of education we can offer our young people, we will be obliged to reconsider and review this decision.

This is an exciting time for the Federation and offers all members of the community an opportunity to engage in the sustainability of our four schools and by extension, our communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of all four communities for their continued support and wish you all the very best for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Anne C. Vetch



Anne Vetch

Chair of Governors, Upper Wharfedale Primary Federation