



North Yorkshire County Council
Mowbray School



Dear Parent/Carer

Thursday 2nd March 2017

This year has been extremely busy with so many exciting things going on in school, this week alone has seen pupils participating the annual Bedale pancake race; anti bullying workshops using virtual reality goggles where pupils can see what is happening all around them and yesterday the opportunity to participate in wheelchair basketball, which our pupils thoroughly enjoyed and learnt to understand the challenges wheelchair users face.

The new classrooms are progressing extremely well and will be complete by the end of this month, they consist of three classrooms; toilets; a specialist calm room; a sensory circuit room and another small teaching room. The new teaching block will significantly improve our teaching facilities. I am looking forward very much to seeing pupils occupying the new building. As with all the new facilities and classrooms we have had built over the past five years, they have been funded directly by the school, not by the Local Authority.

We will on our return after Easter open three additional primary classrooms, enabling us to reduce some class sizes and accommodate additional pupils, to do this we have made new staff appointments and making further appointments during the remainder of this term. Demand for places at the school is incredibly high, this is also reflected across other North Yorkshire special schools and as you may be aware the demand for school places nationally is on the increase.

Last month we subscribed to using an app called '**OurSchoolsApp**' and it is through this that we will now send messages and letters home, a letter was sent out about this prior to half term with instructions as to how to access it. You can download the app to smartphones or tablet computers, by searching for the app or going on this web page <http://www.OurSchoolsApp.com>. The app is very useful and simple to use. I would also recommend following school via our *facebook* page and *twitter* account which are located on the front page of our website <http://www.mowbrayschool.co.uk/> we publish all sorts of useful information and news on our *facebook* page and I'm sure that you will find it useful.

This past year we have been affected by staff absence, mainly due to ill health, with several staff receiving hospital treatment, with one teacher from primary being absent since October. We know that this does impact on the work we do and on the children, but we minimise this through the cover arrangements we put in place. This term we have seen various virus's and infections sweeping through school and I am grateful to those parents who have complied with our requests to ensure if your child is ill to not send them back to school until they are fully recovered.

As with the majority of schools with secondary aged pupils, we face challenges with how pupils use social media through the internet outside of school, to communicate with each other. Our pupil's use of internet based communication systems is to be encouraged, but only in a constructive way. Sadly we are being told that some of our pupils are using this to say unpleasant things about each other, they then bring these problems into school and we then have disputes to resolve. I would ask parents to carefully monitor how your pupils use their mobile phones, tablet computers and other devices, to help prevent such problems.

One final thing, please can you ensure that we have up to date contact details.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Tearle, Headteacher