

December 2021

Dear Parent,

First, a belated welcome to those new to Ickleford Primary School. I hope your child has settled in well, and that your expectations for their education are being met.

Until recently, we had been relatively free of Covid-related disruptions; you will know that many other schools have not been so fortunate. Sadly, two year-groups have been affected over the past few weeks, and particularly with the current outbreak in Y2, there have been profound impacts. The postponement of the Nativity is particularly galling, especially for the children and their parents. The decision to defer was difficult but, I believe, necessary. I do, however, understand everyone's frustration and disappointment.

We are all aware that children's education has been impacted over the last two years. Governors are monitoring pupils' attainment and progress with a view to helping staff address gaps in learning that might have appeared. Our initial focus, however, has been on bolstering wellbeing – children learn most effectively when they are happy and secure. I am confident, due to our experienced teaching staff along with the school's ethos, that educational outcomes for your child will be strong.

You will have seen in Mrs Dury's last newsletter that we are bringing in-house our catering function. This is an important move, and one which the governors – after careful review – supported enthusiastically. There is increasing evidence of the importance of balanced nutrition on educational outcomes and pupil behaviour. We hope that improved quality and choice will increase the children's enthusiasm for school lunches. This is particularly important for those for whom school lunch might be their main meal of the day.

The Governing Board has spent much of this term on the five-yearly review of the school's vision, mission and ethos. You will hear more about this next term, but we have set six core values which will underpin everything the school community does:

Ensuring a happy teaching environment; Building an inclusive community; Instilling values; Developing resilient pupils; Creating independent thinkers with a passion for learning; Nurturing potential.

You and your child will be asked to play a role in adopting these values and will be able to help us judge how successful we are in delivering our objectives.

It is evident from recent news and in-school events that there is still a way to go with the pandemic, and that 2022 will pose challenges. The strength of the Ickleford Primary School community will, I am sure, help us rise to the occasion.

I wish you a happy and healthy Christmas, and all the best for the new year.

Miles Maxwell,
Chair of Governors, Ickleford Primary School