

10th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing with some important information for the end of term and Christmas break.

September seems a long time ago now. Much hard work has gone into making sure that both Solway and Beacon Hill remain Covid 19 secure, and I would like to thank everyone concerned – cleaners, site managers, teaching and support staff, governors and of course students and parents who have worked together to keep everyone safe. It is testament to our high standards and determination that we have had very very few positive cases in school.

You may have heard that the DfE suggested that schools could take Friday 18th December as an additional inset day. In line with other schools in Cumbria we have decided not to do this and we will be open on that day. Both schools will have the usual early closure – 12:30 at Beacon Hill and 1:00 at Solway. Please check Facebook for details.

Headteachers have been asked to carry out on call contact tracing from Saturday 19th December until Christmas Eve. Should your child become unwell and test positive for Covid 19 between those dates, please call the school's mobile number to inform us and allow school to inform close contacts – we will phone or text anyone affected. The number to call is 07858 328848. This number and a reminder of what to do will be on Facebook and the school websites.

Finally, 2021 contains many uncertainties, but I am confident that we are strong and resilient and we will manage whatever challenges come our way.

Whatever those challenges are, we will at Beacon Hill be facing them without Mr Gee. As you will know, I am delighted to remind you that Mr Gee, after 12 years at Beacon Hill, is going onto a well deserved promotion to Headship at the West Cumbria Learning Centre. I am delighted for Danny that he has been recognised for the fantastic school leader he is; WCLC are very lucky to have him, he is entirely right for that role and I have no doubt at all that he will make a superb Headteacher. This role is absolutely made for him - the students there will find him challenging, firm, empathetic, fair, consistent and their champion, as our students have over the last decade and more at Beacon Hill. The time for him to move to Headship is right and thoroughly well deserved, and I am looking forward to working with him and his new school in partnership next year.

Mr Gee leaves a huge legacy at Beacon Hill – not least the bike club which will be continued by Mr Young and to which Mr Gee has already asked to return for our next challenge!

We are taking the opportunity provided by this change to re-structure the senior leadership teams at both Solway and Beacon Hill. I am delighted to say that Tom Hailwood, currently Head of School at Solway, will be working with me as Executive Head to develop that role to become Head of School over both Solway and Beacon Hill. Mr Young remains as Assistant Head. At Solway, Steph Thorp is stepping up to the role of Deputy Head.

I would like to thank you all for your support and understanding for both schools through what has been a difficult term. It is not a surprise that we have managed the situation we find ourselves in well, with optimism and energy. I am confident we will do the same in 2021, whatever that brings. It only remains for me to wish you all a happy, peaceful, safe and healthy Christmas, and I look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Monday January 4th 2021.

With very best wishes for a lovely Christmas,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Schafer". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Judith Schafer
Executive Headteacher