

**With October half term fast approaching** we thought we would write with a number updates so that you are fully aware of some of our plans for the rest of the autumn term.

We would like to begin with a heartfelt thank you to all families in The Lakes School community who have done an amazing job in helping the school get so far into the autumn term without a confirmed case of coronavirus. On a daily basis, we are doing our very best to minimise the possibility of any transmission of the virus within school. We are extremely thankful to all parents and extended families who are ensuring that, outside of school, our students continue to follow simple rules regarding social distancing, hand hygiene and the wearing of face masks in shops.

Typically, at this time of year, schools see symptoms of the common cold and influenza, and we thank parents for being vigilant and for securing a Covid-19 test where it is felt necessary. We are pleased for everyone concerned that all of the students who have been tested so far have had a negative result. Fingers crossed that this positive news can continue in the weeks ahead.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to our students who have responded so warmly and positively to the arrangements we have put in place since we returned to school in September. Our students have taken these new arrangements in their stride and I am pleased to say that the school has settled in to a happy and gentle rhythm.

We would like to say a particular thank you to the students who travel to and from school using the bus service as we have received such positive feedback from all of the bus drivers about the behaviour of our students. It's always lovely to hear the behaviour of our students reflected so positively by members of the local community.

The same can very much be said within school where our students have done such an amazing job of settling into the routine of the one-way system, hand sanitising, wiping down desks at the end of lessons and wearing a face mask in the lunch queue. In addition, all of our students leave site by the same exit near the MUGA and it really is lovely to hear so many stories of our students saying farewell to staff and passing on their wishes for staff to have a nice weekend or a pleasant evening. Such a lovely way to end the day.

Thank you for your continued vigilance during the half term break and we look forward to what we hope will be an uninterrupted approach to Christmas.



Year 7 Fitness students completing an activity called Time Travel!

## Digital Prospectus

We are pleased to announce the launch of our new online digital prospectus which provides an overview of our work at The Lakes School. The image to the right captures the true spirit of life at our school, one of adventure, the importance of the journey and the importance of friendship - all in the pursuit of aiming high, reaching your goals and your potential.

Our digital prospectus can be found on the prospectus page of our website or by clicking [here](#).



## Parent guide to assessment

A team of governors and staff have recently been putting the finishing touches to our parent guide to assessment. Last year, we moved from five assessment points in the year to three and this brand new guide will provide all parents with detailed information about how we set targets for and assess your child during their time at The Lakes School. We look forward to emailing a copy to all parents in the near future.

## Digital learning

I think you will agree that we all enjoyed a steep learning curve with regard to digital learning from the point when schools closed in March 2020. I am pleased to say that we are keen to further embrace the role of digital learning as a teaching and learning tool and we now looking forward to launching a digital learning page on our website. Our digital learning webpage is already in place and contains a handy self study guide which was launched during the summer so please take a look by clicking [here](#).

We are currently putting the finishing touches to a number of guides for students and parents which will help you make the most of mobile devices when accessing the Microsoft Office 365 suite of applications which is available to all students through their school email account login. We will also be recommending a number of applications for mobile devices which students may consider using to help them keep on top of their school work. We are keen to support all of our students to become independent and self organised students and to help them sensibly, and in a healthy way, to



Sixth Form students renovating our slate sign

incorporate the use of their mobile device into their daily lives. We know from our communications with students that the vast majority of children access Microsoft Teams and other applications solely through a mobile phone or tablet. We see it as our duty to support students in making the most of these applications at a time when a home desktop computer is less common in our households. Whilst a laptop computer is still a popular choice in the home we do recognise that the functionality of mobile devices does now enable our students to access the full range of Microsoft Office 365 applications that they need to complete their school work. We look forward to supporting parents and students through our digital learning webpage and we will email all parents and students once significant updates to that page have been added.



Year 7 on the dizzy heights of Wansfell

## Timely Communication with Parents

The restrictions on social distancing in schools means that it is not possible for schools to bring parents into the building for face-to-face meetings due to the possibility of virus transfer. However, you will be pleased to know that we have been working on an alternative approach which will focus on timely communications with all parents about your child's achievement and progress. Read on to find out about our intentions regarding timely communication with parents.

### What do we already have in place?

Many of you will remember that we recently changed our information management system and we continue to see a fantastic uptake and engagement with the Arbor Parent Portal and the Arbor Parent App. This app provides all parents with timely communication about merits, behaviour and assessment point reports alongside the ability to pay for trips and to see your child's timetable. From within the portal or the app, you are also able as a parent to recommend changes to your child's contact details which we are able to assess and approve in school. Outside of Arbor, we take great pride in contacting parents regularly to ensure that you are fully informed regarding your child, particularly where we feel there is a medical or behaviour matter that you need to be aware of. All of this will continue to be part of the fabric of the school. We are also able to arrange meetings through Microsoft Teams where this is felt to be a good alternative to an in-person meeting.



### What will timely communication feel like for parents?

In the absence of formal parents evenings, which typically happen once a year for each year group, we believe that we are able to move to a more enlightened approach based on timely communication between parents and the school.

Alongside phone calls and direct emails between teachers and parents, Arbor also enables teachers to send emails or text messages to parents from class registers. This is one of the main reasons why we changed our information management system as we felt that it would provide us with a manageable way of continuing to communicate with parents. Teachers are able to email the parents of a whole class that they teach or a specific group of parents. This will enable teachers to provide parents with timely updates about progress in lessons. Typically, this will be in the form of an update that will not require a response from yourself as a parent.

After the October half term, we will formally begin the arrangements for timely communication with parents and this will mean that throughout the rest of the year you will receive a sensible flow of information from all of your child's teachers about their work in class. Teachers will use their judgement about how best to make this communication as we appreciate that sometimes a phone call is better than an email, and whilst a text message is more direct, it is important that we do not become a school that sends parents numerous text messages as we understand that text messages really should be used in more of an emergency situation.

So, during the course of a term, and across the academic year, you should expect to receive updates from your child's teachers which will help you to feel connected to your child's life at The Lakes School, even when we are not able to welcome you for the in-person meetings we value so highly.

We always welcome contact from parents and we will continue to do so. Please do get in touch via phonecall or email at [admin@lakes.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@lakes.cumbria.sch.uk) should you wish to make contact with any member of staff and we will be sure to put you in touch straight away.

## Attendance Update

This half term, the tutor groups with the highest attendance so far are:

Years 7-11      Brathay 5 with 97.4%.

Sixth Form      6JBa with 98.1%.

Well done to both tutor groups!

Good school attendance is vital in helping students access the many learning opportunities available and also to build their academic and social skills for the future. Thank you to all parents and carers who are helping our students achieve good attendance.

As a reminder, if your child is absent from school, please make sure you let us know as soon as possible. The management of attendance is a key part of our work to safeguard all students. You can let us know the reason for your child's absence by:

Telephone:      015394 40810

Email:            attendance@lakes.cumbria.sch.uk

On our website, we have a dedicated attendance page which includes our leave of absence request form and other useful information. Please find the link to the attendance page [here](#).

## Photo Calendar 2021

Once again, we are pleased to be able to offer for sale our annual calendar which has been organised by Mrs Jones from all of the amazing photos submitted by our students.

You can purchase a calendar through the Arbor Parent Portal or the Arbor Parent App.

To purchase a calendar, you will need to go into your child's dashboard page in Arbor and select the 'Clubs' option.

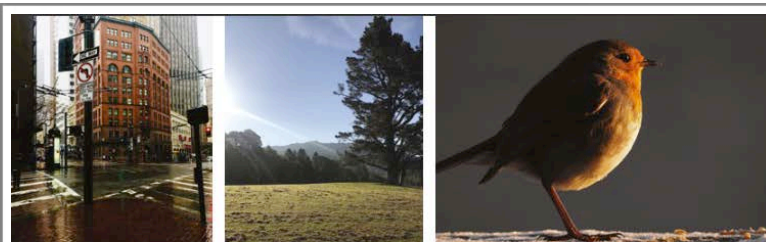
In clubs you will see calendar to buy, click on this to add the option for your child.

Then, select one calendar at £6.00.

(If you wish to order more you will have to ask for additional sessions which will bring up a list of dates, if you want two calendars click on two dates, three three dates and so forth).

Then just follow the tabs to the purchase page, add card details and pay!

*Best wishes for a peaceful half term break and thank you as always, from the governors and staff at The Lakes School, for your continued support.*



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**2021**

