

Acting Headteacher
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Dear Parent/Carer

Future management of Burnhope Primary School

You will remember that last November 2020 a letter was published to explain that Mrs Adamson would be moving on to a new post. Since then, our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Bryson, stepped up to be Acting Headteacher. Mrs Adamson supported Mrs Bryson as Associate Headteacher during the Spring Term 2021. Mrs Adamson has spent 2 days each week at Burnhope Primary to support and advise school. This arrangement is now coming to an end and governors have been carefully considering the next best step for our school. Although, Mrs Bryson has performed a commendable job as Acting Headteacher, that model is not sustainable.

The governors have come to a decision that to ensure the very best possible outcomes for all children concerned, to look towards a 'shared Head Teacher' arrangement. This means that one head teacher will oversee several schools of similar sizes and contexts within Durham County.

The benefits for our children will be:

- **Financial sustainability:** which allows us to continue to set our budget to provide engaging activities and high-quality resources
- **Retain staffing structure:** the teachers and support staff will remain the same providing continuity of class teaching to children
- **Shared working and Partnerships:** which gives staff the opportunity to develop themselves which will improve opportunities for professional development and upskill them
- **Shared leadership:** which would allow for teachers to develop a specialist role by distributing subject leadership roles
- **Joint procurement:** which would give the school more buying power to share memberships, subscriptions and buying in bulk providing more for our children

This decision will also maintain our school within the heart of its local community with the most benefit for all. On a day to day basis children and parents will see very little change.

Durham County Council have identified The Discovery Federation of Schools (Moorside and New Brancepeth Primary Schools) as a group of similar small schools who would also benefit from this arrangement. Their current Executive Head Teacher has experience of working within small schools and at maintaining their unique community context. Therefore, Governors have agreed that from April 2021, Mrs Templeton will work across her current Federation of schools and our school as a 'Shared Head Teacher'. She will divide her time between them, spending 2 days per week at Burnhope Primary School. Mrs Bryson, will resume her role as Deputy Headteacher and will assume responsibility for the school in the 3 days Mrs Templeton is off site.

This arrangement includes a degree of flexibility so if, for example, a serious issue arose at any of the schools, Mrs Templeton would be able to attend within a very short time to lend support.

This is only a trial and we have entered into this arrangement for a fixed period of time to see if it is a successful model for our school. The arrangement will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Governors have given this a great deal of thought and spent much time ensuring this was the right decision for Burnhope Primary School. Please rest assured, as always, we have the best interests of your children at the heart of everything we do.

Should you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Alan Gibson
Chair of Governors

