

NEWSLINE

North Primary School and Nursery

A Town Centre School with a Strong Community Ethos

March 2016
Issue 2



North Bids a Fond Farewell To Mrs. Watson, making a difference at North for 21 years

Mrs Watson is the school finance officer. She has been working at the school for 21 years, starting in April 1995. She will be retiring at the end of this term.

She has seen many changes over the years not only to the school but also to how schools budgets and finances work. When she started the school budget was a few hundred thousand pounds, now it is closer to £2 million. In those days schools did not have fully delegated budgets and a lot of things like payroll were done in



Mrs. Watson at her desk. Do you think her desktop background gives you a clue as to what she will be doing when she retires?

County Hall. Now Mrs. Watson does this so the staff have to be very nice to her if they want to get paid!

For the first two years here the school did not have any learning support assistants. She has also managed the furnishing and equipping for the two major building programmes which has seen the school grow from 40 per year group to 45 to the current number of 60. And she has also managed the finances for a whole range of projects to keep the buildings and grounds in good condition and classrooms up to date with computer technology.

During her reign controlling the purse strings she has worked with three headteachers and helped build a strong consortium finance officer group.

She has run a very tight ship, keeping staff in check, driving deals with suppliers to make sure we get good value. The local authority recently audited the books and their inspector said her systems were, "out of this world". Very true.

Office manager Mrs. Sancassani says, "We will be very sorry to say goodbye to Mrs Watson at the end of term, she will be

greatly missed by everyone who works with her. Colleagues, staff and governors have drawn on her vast knowledge and experience which has been an asset to the whole school, particularly in managing the continual changes to finance and HR systems. Mrs Watson has taken all of this in her stride. A big thank you and our very best wishes to Mrs Watson for a relaxing retirement, enjoying her travels and the sunshine!"

Mrs. Blackwell, Chair of Governors, has these fine words to say —

When Mrs Watson started as the office assistant 21 years ago no one could have predicted how her role would grow, and that she would rise to become head of Financial Management in the school.

Back then the office was situated in the area of the cloakrooms where Mr Coltart now has his office. It had a very Victorian feel with dark oak fittings, and was shared with the Headteacher, and school secretary.

Over the years Mrs Watson's role has grown along with the school, and she should be congratulated for her

adaptability into this now very important job. She has been a friend to the many staff who have worked in the school over the past 21 years, a kindly welfare officer to the children, and a reliable source of information for all the parents over that time.

Mrs Watson served a term of office on the governing body as the Staff Governor, and as Finance Officer she has worked closely with the Governors over the years. We will miss her knowledge and understanding of the intricacies of the budget, and would like to thank her for all her hard work over the years. We wish her all the best for a well-earned long and happy retirement with her husband.

Mrs. Watson said she is going to miss the children and staff who have been a really important part of her life for the past 21 years. She says she is not going to miss getting up early. Mrs. Watson loves the sun and she is looking forward to having many holidays with her husband in exotic locations, whenever they want.

Staff, past and present, governors and family are taking her out for a farewell dinner at the Officers Club at the end of term. To get her in the mood it is a fancy dress dinner with a Caribbean theme. Let's hope it is not too cold that night!

A collection has started for a leaving gift. If you would like to contribute, please give your donation to someone (but not Mrs. Watson!) in the office. Thank you.

Mrs. Tracy Davies has been appointed to take over from Mrs Watson and she will be starting on April 18th. She will be visiting the school in the next couple of weeks to prepare her for her new role.

OPEN AFTERNOON FOR YEAR 1 TO YEAR 6 TUESDAY 15TH MARCH DETAILS OVERLEAF



Please support our amazing team of runners!



<https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/freeforall>

follow the link to the Colchester Half Marathon 2016

**Non-Uniform Sportswear Day for Sports Activities
Friday 11th March**

The whole school will be showing support for our half marathon team on Friday 11th March, when we will be having a non-uniform day, raising funds for Free for All. Children will be able to come in dressed in their sportswear and will take part in sports activities during the day. This event has been a great part of the build up to the half marathon in the last 2 years and we hope all the children enjoy the day! Collection buckets will be in the playground before and after school. And don't forget to.....

CHEER ON OUR RUNNERS ON SUNDAY

Mud Glorious Mud!

What a difference a day makes! Year 5 and 6 certainly had the worst conditions for running in the partnership cross country race on Wednesday 2nd March. As the title of this report says, mud was the factor of the day closely followed by sleet and rain. Freezing conditions didn't deter our intrepid runners though and they all gave it their best shot. My heart went out to all runners and again I felt immensely proud that they all competed and tried their very best. Well done to all who ran. Thank you also to Kieron's mum who helped transport children to the event and Mr Garnett and Mrs Murray for braving the mud (in work attire) to collect the children. Roll on next year and let's pray for conditions like the year 3 and 4 had.

Mrs Eves reporting

Open Afternoon Tuesday 15th March Y1-6 2.00 – 3.00pm

We do hope you are looking forward to the Open Afternoon. The afternoon will be a cross between an Open Lesson and an Open Evening.

The children will be engaged in lessons but these will be designed so that you will be able to help them with their activity but also look at their work in their books and the work on display.

You will be free to visit all classrooms [but not Reception or Nursery] but your children will remain in class.

Parking will be available in the lower playground.

A programme will be sent home on Monday outlining what each class will be doing.

Please note: at 3.00pm a bell will ring and that will signal time for you to leave to wait for your children in the playground. Classes will then have time to tidy up and get ready to go home. They will be dismissed in the usual way.

DATES FOR TERM

Friday 11th March	Non-Uniform Sportswear Day	
Sunday 13th March	Colchester Half Marathon	
Tuesday 15th March	OPEN AFTERNOON	
Friday 18th March	School Disco	
Thursday 24th March	Last day of Spring Term - Governors Awards and NSA Easter Parade	
Monday 11th April	First day of Summer Term	
Friday 27th May	Last day of half term	
Tuesday 7th June	Return to School	
Friday 22nd July	Last day of School Year	
Monday 5th September	New School Year begins	