



RISEDALE
A family of learners

RISEDALE SCHOOL

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Monday 8th January 2024

Dear Pupils, Parents/Carers and the Catterick Community,

Since arriving as Risedale's headteacher in September 2016, I have been overwhelmed at the incredible potential of its staff and pupils. I have been honoured to have been able to take the school on this journey from where it was then, to where it is now.

It is a 'job unfinished' as in any school. With ever-changing government directives, pressures of changing community needs, and an ever-changing demographic, it is what keeps us all motivated and excited as each and every day is different. Despite still living in Newcastle, it's your children and my staff that have kept me coming all of the way down to Catterick every day since 2016!

When I started here the school was heavily in debt and with dwindling numbers and it was down to just 410 pupils. It was vulnerable. Since then, we have grown the school as our community recognises the benefits of Risedale to most young people in the area. We now have more subjects on our curriculum, all of our pupils are issued with personal laptops, our uniform is one of the cheapest around to source and we have even more expert and specialist staff. We are also now close to 600 pupils and no longer in any debt. All of that is thanks to you, as a community, for your faith in our staff and allowing us to grow into the family of learners we now are.

Catterick is an amazing community. From a large population in our military to the civilians that live alongside them, I am proud to have been given the privilege of leading the school over these years. You have supported me through difficult times, including Covid, even when I got things wrong (which we all do) and I have learned an immense amount from you all. I am incredibly humbled, too, by the way you all stood up and gave me massive support when, in June 2022 during our Pride Week celebrations, you stood by me on my own 'coming out journey' as the first ever UK State Secondary Headteacher to publicly come out as a gay man, albeit 40 years too late! This is something that would not have been possible even just a few years ago. I am immensely grateful for that. So thank you!

After what will have been 32 years in school-based education, and 8 of those years being your headteacher, the time has come for me to allow someone else to steer the ship and for me to explore new ventures. This decision has been extremely difficult for me as I do feel I am placing myself in a position of personal loss, breaking away from a family I truly love. But it is one that is also exciting for me as I seek out new goals. I have been happy here and proud of what we have achieved together. But from September this year, the school will be led by another. I do hope that I have given the school the momentum it needed and it is now up to another to lead it on its ongoing journey.

I wish the pupils and staff at Risedale, as well as the local community, the very best wishes into the future. I know it's going to be a great one!

Yours sincerely,

Mr Colin D Scott

