



Arkengarthdale Primary School Press Release

Visit by Rishi Sunak MP

Richmond MP Rishi Sunak has seen the fruits of collaborative working between two North Yorkshire schools

Separated by 15 miles and a 25-minute car journey, Arkengarthdale Church of England Primary School and Richmond Methodist Primary Schools work closely together.

During his visit to the Richmond school, Mr Sunak toured the newly refurbished Early Years Foundation Stage, then observed PE and music lessons, in which pupils from the two schools enjoyed learning together.

Mr Sunak particularly relished participating in a debate on the subject "How important is it to have a Royal family?" and finally sampled a school dinner menu with a group of children from both schools.

Mr Sunak said: "I very much enjoyed my visit to the school, hearing about the benefits the pupils gain from the schools working together.

"The debate about the Royal family was very polite and well led. I am sure some of my colleagues in the House of Commons could learn from the exemplary way pupils conducted themselves!"

Head teacher Helen Ring explained that the schools shared the same leadership team and the same commitment to high quality education, whilst retaining distinctive characteristics and separate governing bodies.

Every Friday, Arkengarthdale School join Richmond Methodist School for 'Enrichment Friday', a day that has a different focus and structure to others.

Pupils from Richmond also visit Arkengarthdale for forest school sessions in which the children learn about the outdoor environment in woodland adjacent to the school.

Miss Ring said the working arrangements not only provided opportunities for children to work with others from a different setting and build new friendships, but it also allowed staff to work collaboratively with colleagues who specialise in different subjects.

The quality of teaching and learning in PE and Performing Arts has been enhanced through additional specialist teaching for Years 1 to 6, delivered by a music specialist from Arkengarthdale School and a freelance dance teacher.

An added benefit is that there are opportunities for teachers to be released from classes, to enable them to benefit from curriculum or leadership time, or to observe and learn from effective practice. Pupil, parent and staff feedback from both schools has been overwhelmingly positive.