



Friday 19th July 2019

Dear Parents / Carers

Are we really at the end of the school year again? How time flies! For those of you with Year 4 children moving on, I am sure the end of term will bring mixed emotions of fond reflections and memories, pride – that your children are a credit to us all and that they are well prepared for the next phase in their learning journey and a sprinkling of worry that we, as adults often feel during times of change (usually far more than the children do!)

Feedback that I have received in relation to **transition** to new schools and transition in our school has been very positive. The Year 4 children were full of 'tales to tell' on their return and are largely positive about their next exciting chapter. They have worn their leavers 'uniform' with pride (even hoodies when it is really warm!), enjoyed their emotional leavers service, had fun with their friends at their leavers disco and enjoyed their last day at St Edward's visiting the teachers that have influenced them at St Edward's, Cheddleton.

Our new to nursery and reception children joined us for transition. We were amazed at their 'school readiness' and are pleased that they will be part of our St Edward's family in September. Our current nursery, reception, Year 1, 2 and 3 transition days went well too. The children enjoyed their time learning about what is in store for next year, meeting their new teachers (with the exception of Robins – more on that later in my letter) and hearing where their new classrooms will be next year. Our transition project around the text 'The Huge Bag of Worries' provided a platform for discussion around worries and wishes. The children worked with their new and current teachers to explore and manage feelings. This helps the children to develop confidence and resilience in managing change.

Now for a few updates from this half term...

First and foremost, we are the proud winners of the **Leek School Allotments Garden Competition AND Scarecrow competition**. We all agree that we are very worthy winners and I thank you all for your contributions. The children have thoroughly enjoyed learning about planting, growing and their local community as they have developed their class beds. Our Community Garden will be open for **Cheddleton Open Gardens** this weekend so please bring your family and friends to share our pride of place! On that note, a pupil in our school also won the competition to design a front cover for the Open Gardens Programme. Well done to Natalie - another fantastic achievement to celebrate! Most importantly for me, is that the children learn in and care for their garden throughout the whole year. We are looking forward to planting bulbs in the autumn and watching them grow in the spring.

We are also celebrating achieving our silver **Artsmark** award. We are very grateful to Mrs Higgins who prepared evidence to submit for this that showed how our school and curriculum enables children to learn a broad range of artistic disciplines and provides opportunities that *'inspire young people to create, experience and participate in extraordinary art and culture'*

I should also mention that our Governors have successfully completed their Department for Education accredited **Governor Leadership Programme**. This shows their commitment to strategic leadership at St Edward's and I thank them for wanting nothing but the best education and care for our children.

Our **Community Artwork** was, as promised proudly displayed at Westwood College. We received fantastic feedback about the quality of work, as well as the wide range of creative ideas on show. Thank you again for your contributions to this. We are hoping that the work will be up for you to see early in the autumn term. Thank you to Mrs Hordern and Mrs Manifold for leading on this project, and to their team of helpers that transported and collected our works of art.

Once again, we have celebrated yet more **sporting achievements** this half term at St Edward's! Our achievements in rounders and rugby are commendable and our swimmers achieved first place at the School Swimming Gala. Their medals were presented yesterday by a triathlon athlete who trains with, and competes for Great Britain – what an inspiration for our children! Thank you to Mr Carter for giving up his family time so that our children can take part in these tournaments.

Our **Songbirds** were amazing again when they performed at The Victoria Hall. They thoroughly enjoyed singing with their Teddy bears and were, as always, impeccably behaved. Thank you Mrs Steele, Mrs Huckfield and Mrs Blairs for your dedication to our choir so that the children were able to have this wonderful opportunity. Thank you also to the staff that gave up their evening to supervise and/or watch the performance. The children really do appreciate seeing their teachers at events out of school.

Thank you Mrs Clifford for leading on our Year 3 and 4 participation in a creative event called '**Midsummer Moments**' with many other Leek schools at Westwood College. The Year 4's took part in workshops that were inspirational and enjoyable and our Year 3's performed their 'Greatest Showman' dance on the BIG stage. Their dance really was a showcase of skill and enjoyment. They were all very proud of themselves and are very grateful to Mr Carter and Mrs Campbell for their commitment to teaching them so well and again, to the staff that gave up their precious family time to supervise and support in the evening. Thank you to you all for the fantastic costumes and for supporting from the audience too.

Our Key Stage 2 performance '**Rebecca Riding Hood**' was another success this week. Well done to all actors, singers, dancers, stage hands, lighting and music technicians, raffle sellers, poster designers...the list is endless. The children self-managed their performance which is an excellent example of how St Edward's prepares them to be confident and competent in the many front and back stage roles that are needed to put on such a fantastic show.

As always, I thank the **PTFA** on your behalf for their commitment to fundraising that pays for the many 'extras' they buy. Of late, they have bought many items for the school garden, the Year 4 leavers gifts, book bags for our new to school children and water bottles for all children in school. We have had excellent feedback about our Special Gentleman's Day and Summer Fair and the Year 4 leavers disco last night was certainly one to remember for the children. We say a fond farewell to Clare who leaves this time and thank her for her MANY years of dedication to the PTFA.

And now an update on September;

As many of you will know from the children and our drop in evening, we are re-organising classrooms during the school holidays so that Key Stage classes are together. This will give the children more opportunities to learn in year group teams as well as classes. We are also having our cloakrooms refurbished too.

During our 'Meet the Teacher' sessions, most of you have had the opportunity to meet your child's class teacher and Key Stage staff team. However, Robins have not yet met their class teacher (letter home today), who will be joining our team in September – Mrs Gratton. We know that she will be an asset to our teaching team and was, in fact, a teacher student here four years ago. Mrs Huckfield is moving into a new role in September. She will be working in most classes across the school, and leading in music, RE and worship.

We also have other staffing updates to share. Mrs Shepherd has now left and will be moving to Sheffield very soon. Mrs A Johnson is moving to her new school in September and Mrs Eyre has hung up her Lunchtime Supervisor apron for the last time at St Edward's this week. Mrs Walker has recently decided to start a new chapter in her life and will not be returning in September. We wish Mrs Walker all the very best as they move on to pastures new.

I would like to end my first year at St Edward's by thanking you all for your warm welcome and strong partnership working with the school. Your viewpoints are valued, as are the children's, and we use these to inform our development plans and our continual improvement journey at St Edward's. I know that, although communication has improved, you want, and are right to expect, letters more promptly and improved communication for working parents who use Before and After School provision. I am also aware of the volume of emails that you receive and we will review this in the new school year to ensure that the information you receive is relevant, purposeful and accurate. Your positive feedback and respect makes me, and the staff team, feel valued and motivated to continue in a career that we are passionate about.

I send our very best wishes to all of our leavers. Have a happy and safe summer all and I look forward to seeing you in the community over the summer and/or welcoming most of you back in September.



Mrs Machin
Principal

