

## What an amazing year for St. Bede's Junior School!

Sporting achievement in the school is unbelievable; I think the children will be ready for the next Olympics.

In 2016/17, St. Bede's Junior School won the Cross Country, the Widnes Town Sports, Tennis, Table Tennis and Swimming. We went on to achieve the Cheshire and Merseyside championship for Table Tennis. The Tennis team are the new Merseyside Champions too. What a collection of trophies to add to our display! This year every pupil will also take part in the Daily Mile as our aim is to increase and/or enhance the fitness of the children... and staff!

Our pupils' skills do not lie only in sport: we won first prize in the inaugural Magistrates in the Community 'Mock Trial' competition in Warrington on 20<sup>th</sup> June. The team competed against St. Vincent's and Alderman Bolton to prosecute and then defend a fictional case of Harassment without Violence.

The competition saw our pupils take on the roles of magistrates, defence lawyers, prosecutors, witnesses, defendants, court usher, court legal advisor, court reporter and court artist. The judges were so impressed by how well prepared our pupils were; by their clarity when speaking and their ability to improvise when questioning and responding.

The arts has long since been enjoyed at St. Bede's Junior School. The performance of Mary Poppins not only celebrated singing, dancing and great acting, but also the fabulous IT skills of the school staff. The wonderful confidence of our pupils was further celebrated at the start of the summer term in the first (though not the last) Arts Evening. Singer, dancers, musicians and speech choir came together for the most wonderful performance, expertly coordinated by Miss Arrowsmith.

With all the sport, arts and community work it is a surprise that there is any time left for academics! But there is and this year, St. Bede's Junior School is delighted to become a 'Maths No Problem!' school- one of only nine in the country. As a model school we will share teaching and learning strategies in maths with other schools and continue to develop our approaches so we continue to improve.

Mrs. Geoghegan worked incredibly hard to achieve the History Quality Mark Silver Award, which has identified the school's strengths in history and given tangible ways to further improve. This year the staff will be working under Mrs. Halliday's leadership as we aim to attain the Primary Science Quality Mark once again.

Receiving the Investors in people Silver Award (we have held the standard award since 1996) was a real day for celebration. In a school budget, staffing takes up a huge chunk, so it is essential that these staff are invested in. To then be shortlisted for the Silver Employer of the Year Award is cause for even more celebration. There are twelve nominees and we are delighted to even be nominated, but we still have our fingers crossed for November when the winner is announced.

### How the school's facilities continue to improve

Each year we strive to make best use of the school's budget. We want to give pupils and parents/carers best value for money. We try each year to make improvements to our facilities. This year has been another good year for the improvement of how the inside and outside facilities look around school.

The outdoor garden is still in development although we are particularly proud of it! We aim to develop a peaceful environment in which children of all ages and at all times of the day can feel closer to nature and to God! We will be planting bulbs in the autumn and are looking for any helpful hands in our parents/carers and families who may be able to offer some time to help plant some vegetables and evergreen shrubs.

Inside school, we continue to keep an eye on how the facilities look and improve small areas. The Den has some new furniture; the library is ready for leaning in September and the 'little classroom' next to Classroom 8 has been refurbished so the English and mathematics groups can resume in there in September.

I have worked with the Archdiocese to look at how we can replace the fence around the school and hope that the work starts on this soon. This academic year, we are completely refurbishing the boys' and girls' upstairs toilets to modernise them and make them more attractive (as attractive as children's toilets in school can be!). We are very proud of our school site and try our best to improve all of it!

### Succession = continuity, stability and development

I have always believed in succession, which is a good job as I have been testimony to succession planning. Essentially, this is the process of growing your own leaders.

At St. Bede's Junior School we have middle leaders and senior leaders in the staff. Within school, we also have big leaders and little leaders in the children. We have little leaders who are involved in ICT as Digital Leaders; Anti-bullying ambassadors and Reading Buddies. Then we have the big leaders: every class has an

elected School Councillor and the school staff also elect House Captains for Matthew, Mark, Luke and John from our Year 6 pupils.

Being a prefect is a big responsibility. Feedback from parents/carers, teachers and pupils has identified that the school prefecting system needs to be improved. As such, not every Year 6 child will become a prefect. In September, we will consider what attributes a St. Bede's prefect should have. Prefects should thrive on responsibility and be given a lot of respect by their peers and teachers as they nurture their friends to do their best.

It is similar for the teaching staff too. As we journey through our careers, we develop leaders from the teaching staff by offering them Subject Adviser roles or teaching and learning responsibilities. We have a member of staff who was a trainee, a teacher, a Subject Adviser and is now Deputy Headteacher. I am delighted that Mr. Hurst has been appointed as St. Bede's Junior School's new Deputy Headteacher. Succession planning working at its best!

We also welcome three new staff to the school: Miss Glover (Admin Assistant); Mr. Stalker (Year 5 teacher) and Mrs Woods (Year 6 teacher). I pray that they will be welcomed into the St. Bede's community as I was thirteen years ago.

### Why St. Bede's?

In the summer term we asked the children to choose one thing they would take with them if and when they left from all the systems we have in school to promote outstanding personal development.

The list, though not exhaustive included:

- Mission Statement: *life in all its fullness and celebrates life and learning*
- Assemblies: receiving certificates, photos, being part of the display, singing, performing, celebrating together, praying and achieving our best.
- Nurture: The Den, going to ICT at lunch, taking part in football at breaks, attending extra-curricular club (s), prefecting, librarians, play leaders, celebrating unique talents, including everyone, enrichment opportunities, discos and film nights.
- Rewards - team points, dojos, Headteacher, stickers, sharing good work, celebration assembly
- Feedback: tickled pink and green for growth.

- Parents/carers - having home school agreement, parents/carers evenings, curriculum meetings, assemblies, sports afternoon, joint trips to London and the theatre.
- Attendance - Class cupcakes, class rewards and end of year award.

### The next academic year ahead

The plans for 2017/18 are already underway.

Key School Improvement Plans include:

- Leadership of the school through a moral purpose: Mission Statement, vision, values and action
- Enhancing effective learning behaviours
- The climate for learning
- Teaching and learning approaches:
  - Questioning
  - Thinking Skills
  - Learner Collaboration
- Culture of reflection: teachers and pupils as reflective learners
- Mastery approach to teaching and learning: teaching for depth of understanding; being able to use and apply skills across the curriculum and at home

This is only a 'snapshot'; the School Development Plan for 2017 - 18 is over 100 pages long!