

16 September, 2016

NEWS FROM THE GOOD SHEPHERD TRUST

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the new academic year and all the hope that it promises. As the term begins I wanted to wish you all a fruitful, enjoyable year ahead and update you on some news from last term as well as some planned developments for this year across the trust.

Right at the end of the academic year a paper was published by the Education Policy Institute evaluating the performance of local authorities and multi-academy trusts (of five schools or over). I am delighted to say that, based on pupil outcomes and improvement over the last three years, The Good Shepherd Trust was placed 17th out of 218 organisations. Whilst we will continue to strive towards first place, I did want to share this with you to thank you, the children and the schools for their commitment and impact on improving schools in the Trust.

'BizSchool'



Six of our schools took part a 'BizSchool' challenge in the summer term when primary school pupils learnt key business skills such as finance, art and design, project planning, PR and operations and had the opportunity to launch and run the businesses themselves.

Five of the schools then took their most successful businesses to the first Good Shepherd Trust BizSchool Grand Final held at **Christ's College**, Guildford, to present their concept to a judging 'Bear's Cave' panel which included the Surrey Chamber of Commerce's Chief Executive, Louise Punter.

After an excellent morning of high quality presentations the winner was declared as 'Sugar Sweet', a cake and confectionary business from Falcon's Class at **St Paul's** School with **St John's** 'Scrub a Dub Dub', combining cupcake sales with car washing, singled out for impressive presentation skills.

The competition inspired children to use skills across the curriculum to develop and encouraged them to work as a team, develop confidence and leadership skills. It was wonderful to see them come together and BizSchool will definitely be back on the agenda.

Bishop Andrew at The Weald

Our diocesan bishop, Bishop Andrew, visited **The Weald** informally in June. He attended an assembly led by the children and stayed to chat with staff as the school approached the end of its first year as an academy.

St John's pupils invited to Bishop Jo's consecration



Pupils from **St John's** were given front row seats when the Rt Revd Jo Wells was consecrated as the Bishop of Dorking at Canterbury Cathedral. Bishop Jo's appointment had been announced at St John's earlier in the year when she attended an Easter act of worship led by the children. Bishop Jo will take a major lead in education in the diocese and we are delighted in her early involvement in Trust schools.

Outcomes for Children (Results):

Whilst it is always good for children have such special visitors, the heart of the school is the children and the learning they do both in the formal subjects and equally importantly, in the lifeskills which will serve them in the future. We aim to see children finish their primary education looking forward to secondary school with confidence and resilience. So much of a child's learning cannot be measured. How is it possible to say whether a young person is ready for secondary school or not? However, we can measure their outcomes, their academic results, to see how well they are achieving and how well they are prepared academically for their future.

Parents and carers will know that this year the curriculum and the assessment processes changed beyond all recognition so it is impossible to compare last year's results with this year's. The Department for Education confirmed this on 1 September when they released the latest information on Key Stage Two. It is, however, possible to compare the performance of schools against other schools and against the outcomes of children nationally. To give you some idea of the current position I shall give you a flavour of the Trust's Key Stage Two results:

	% reaching expected standing in reading	% reaching expected standard in writing	% reaching expected standard in mathematics	% expected reaching standard in reading, writing and maths
Good Shepherd Trust	76	72	75	61
National	66	74	70	53
Surrey	73	Unknown	74	58
Hampshire	71	Unknown	71	57

For the first time the Department for Education has given the averages for sponsored academies, (**The Weald, St John's, St Paul's, The Holme** and **St Mary's**) and converter academies (**Queen Eleanor's** and **Ashley**). The national average for children achieving the expected standard in sponsored academies for reading, writing and mathematics is 43%, in the Good Shepherd Trust it is 50%. For converter academies the percentage is 57% nationally compared to 77% in The Good Shepherd Trust.

Whilst these results are encouraging and a tribute to our staff and pupils, I would like to reassure you we are not complacent in any way and will be seeking to enable schools to continue to improve so that all children receive the best possible education.

By the time this letter reaches you I had hoped to be able to send you pupil *progress* information which is really the critical information. Our aim was for every child to make as much progress as they can. Some children make phenomenal progress but still not reach the expected standard. However, the Department for Education has suggested that this is unlikely to be ready before December. As soon as we get it, I shall share it with you. Schools will be doing their own calculations using the DFE formula and we already know that in two schools pupil progress is likely to be in the top 25 percent nationally.

Results at Key Stage Four and Five followed the national trend with singular good results for individuals in **Christ's College** (our only secondary school).

Building Improvements

During the summer break a number of building improvements have been taking place ranging from improving the heating system (at **The Weald**) to expanding the school (at **Ashley**) as the programme for improving school environments continues.

2016-17

This next year promises to be exciting and challenging. We start the academic year with all eight schools having substantive (permanent) headteachers and their own local governing bodies. All schools are fully staffed and there is great enthusiasm for the year ahead. At the same time this comes against a backdrop of the new curriculum and assessment process providing challenges for staff and financial austerity in the country will doubtless affect school funding.

We know that during this year there are several other schools planning to join the Trust and we look forward to welcoming them into the family of schools. As schools join the Trust we will develop an Area Hub model which will enable schools in an area to work together more effectively so that many strengths can be shared across a number of local schools. I will keep you informed on this initiative which is designed to keep each school as a unique school with its own leadership whilst sharing expertise and resources over a small group of schools.

I wish you and your children a successful and enjoyable Autumn term.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Peter Simpson, Chief Executive

Schools in The Good Shepherd Trust:

Ashley, Walton on Thames

Christ's College, Guildford

Queen Eleanor's, Guildford

St John's, Dorking

St Mary's, Chiddingfold

St Paul's, Addlestone

The Holme, Headley

The Weald, Beare Green